THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 11 August, 1929 Number 8

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Notes of the Month
1914–1929 R. P D.

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W. GALLACHER

Socialism and War
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they are deadly serious and so is the task we have to play as the Labour Government pursues its way amid war preparations and wage cuts.

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A Magazine of International Labour

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

1914—1929

An Appeal—International Red Day—Pre-War Again—The Old International and War — 1914 — Why? — Imperialism and "National Defence"—Bourgeois Pacifism—Sequel of 1914—The International General Strike Against War—The First Condition—What is the Future 1914?—International Civil War—New Antagonisms—Forerunners of War —The New Second International Prepares War— The Real Fight Against War

FOR the first time since the founding of the LABOUR MONTHLY *it is necessary to begin these Notes with a warning and an appeal on the position of this journal.* The present number of the LABOUR MONTHLY is in danger of being the last, unless help from friends is rapidly forthcoming. *This warning is not lightly given. The essence of the situation is that, after all expenses are reduced to a minimum, we have to meet a net loss of £20 a month, which is not covered by existing subscriptions or occasional donations. Those who are acquainted with the conditions of publication will recognise that this is a very low figure. But unless we can count on this loss being met, we are only piling up an already existing debt, with no prospect of meeting it. The immediate question is not one of circulation, although we ask for help in this too; the circulation of the* LABOUR MONTHLY *is in fact rising. But the basis of the capitalist press, advertisements, is closed to us; and we have to depend on donations to make good the deficit.* To enable the LABOUR MONTHLY to continue, it is necessary for a sufficient number of friends to combine to guarantee a total donation of £20 a month. *If, for example, one hundred friends of the* LABOUR MONTHLY *who are in a position to do so can combine to guarantee a fixed monthly donation according to their means, whether of £1, 10s., 5s., 2s. 6d. or 1s., so as to reach a total of £20, then the* LABOUR MONTHLY *can continue. Can this be done? We ask for a special effort from all our friends, and for them to seek the co-operation and interest of others.*

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If this can be done, the future of the LABOUR MONTHLY *is secured. But speed is essential. If this basis cannot be secured, the journal will be closed down, as there is no intention of continuing it only to pile up a debt and close down later with that debt unpaid. The work we are doing will go on in other forms; but the definite position won by the* LABOUR MONTHLY, *and the contacts of a journal which has its circulation in every leading country in the world will be lost and not easily regained. Therefore we ask our friends to come to the rescue quickly.*

THE war issue this month dominates all others, and in particular the question of the International Red Day organised in every country in the world as the simultaneous world demonstration and preparation of the revolutionary working class against the coming war. At the outset, it is necessary to say something of the significance of this as the first large-scale attempt at an *international action* to combat the war danger. It is a commonplace on all sides that imperialist war can only be fought by the action of the international working class. Yet such action is impossible except on the basis of previous preparation. How can an army go into battle that has never been marshalled or had one day's training in peace? The old Socialist International pledged itself by the Stuttgart and Bâsle resolutions to international working-class action against war. But no attempt was made to get beyond the phrase and prepare and organise such action beforehand; the phrase remained on paper, and the paper shrivelled up in the first burst of cannon. *To prepare such common international action by the one-day international strike and demonstration against war is worth more than a hundred resolutions, even though the action to begin with is only of the vanguard of the working class.* It is the action that awakens the consciousness, that spreads the idea in the masses, that represents the first gathering of the international working-class army for the coming fight. And particularly important is this in Britain, which is the very centre of imperialist war preparations, where the national limitation of the working-class movement is strongest, and the revolutionary working-class forces are still small; it is above all important that we should play our part in Britain, on

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the widest possible united front basis, without fear of our present smallness, with confidence in the future and consciousness of the historic significance of our task, that we should march parallel with our comrades in every country in this international preparation against war, and show the imperialist warmongers that the international working-class army exists as a living force and is advancing consciously in every quarter of the globe to the future revolutionary fight when the warmongers let loose the call to slaughter.

THE most serious feature of the present-day situation is that, after 1914 has shown once and for all the true character of capitalism and war, the impotence of bourgeois pacifism and the deadly outcome of "Socialist" pacifism which bases itself on the support of the existing imperialist states in the name of "national defence" and thus inevitably turns into social-chauvinism, and the necessity of the revolutionary working-class struggle against imperialist war as the sole means to overcome it, these lessons have not yet been learnt, and the pre-war situation is repeating itself on a far larger scale with terrible identity. The differences are great, and we shall come to consider them; but they are differences in scale and in the degree of world development; the basic root problems remain the same. Once again capitalism, saved and restored by the aid of social democracy from the end which threatened it as a result of the last war, is driving visibly before the eyes of all to renewed world war. Once again the empty talk of bourgeois pacifism echoes on every side to delude the peoples and pave the way to war. And once again the mass of the working-class movements in Western Europe and America, following national-reformist leaderships, trusting in phrases of peace, and intent on winning small social reforms, are treading the path to the pit of war, when their national-reformist leaders will at once become recruiting-sergeants and butchers, while the whole machinery of bourgeois pacifism and its League of Nations will be turned to demonstrating the "justice" of the war. The whirr of the bombing aeroplanes, the sound of cannon, is in the air. But the revolutionary awakening that can alone end all this has still to be achieved. And the first

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step to understand the present situation is to understand the experience that has gone before, the experience of the international Socialist and working-class movement in the fight against war, the lessons from which we must learn at our peril.

WHY did the Socialist International break down in 1914? The world war was no unforeseen event; its coming, its very outlines, were discerned beforehand on every side; the last Congress of the old Socialist International was the Special Congress at Bâsle in 1912, held solely to deal with the question of the near-approaching world war. The duty of International Socialism in the fight against war and in the event of war was explicitly laid down; its lines had been elaborated at every Congress. At the Zürich Congress in 1893 it was laid down:—

> The representatives of the working-class party are under the obligation to vote against all military credits.

At the Paris Congress in 1900 it was laid down:—

> The duty of the Socialist representatives in all parliaments is unconditionally to vote against every military, naval or colonial expenditure.

At the Stuttgart Congress in 1907 the famous decisive formulation of the task of International Socialism in relation to war was laid down, and was repeated word for word in the resolutions of the Copenhagen Congress of 1910 and of the Bâsle Congress of 1912. It is still of value to recall this formulation, which provides the kernel of Marxist policy in relation to war, for the benefit of those who have come later into the movement and to-day unconsciously follow the Second International as "Socialists," without realising that the present-day "Second International" has long ago thrown overboard all the basic and universally-accepted principles of International Socialism up to the war, and that the only successor and carrier forward of International Socialism to-day is the Communist International. The declaration runs:—

> If war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working class in the countries concerned, and of their parliamentary representatives, with the aid of the International Socialist Bureau as a means of co-ordinating their action, to use every effort to prevent war by all

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> the means which seem to them most appropriate, having regard to the sharpness of the class war and to the general political situation.
>
> Should war none the less break out, their duty is to intervene to bring it promptly to an end, and *with all their energies to use the political and economic crisis created by the war to rouse the masses of the people from their slumbers, and to hasten the overthrow of capitalist domination.*

This declaration, it is worth noting, was originally drafted and submitted as an amendment to the proposed resolution by Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg and others at the 1907 Congress. It was universally adopted at the Congress by all the parties present, including the British Labour Party, the French Socialists, the German Social Democracy, &c. The task of the revolutionary working-class struggle against war, and, in the event of war, the task to transform it into the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, is here explicitly laid down. It may further be noted that Lenin, according to a subsequent statement by him, originally drafted this declaration in very much sharper terms, making clear the full task of revolutionary action, and that this was subsequently modified, not on the basis of any disagreement, but on the insistence of Bebel, the leader of German Social Democracy, that, while in full agreement with the sense, and ready to guarantee that German Social Democracy would not fail when the time came, he considered it necessary for police reasons, in order to prevent the party being prematurely declared illegal, to use more guarded language, and accordingly the above formula was after long discussion laboriously worked out to point to the same objective in more "legal" language. There was thus no dispute as to the meaning. (See Zinoviev, *Der Krieg und die Krise des Sozialismus*, footnote to page 619.)

WHY did this universally agreed and pledged policy of International Socialism become a dead letter in the hour of crisis in 1914, so far as the majority parties in England, France, Germany and a number of other countries were concerned, and give place to exactly opposite action? It is important to note that the international line was faithfully carried out by the Socialists of invaded Serbia, who had to bear the first brunt of war, by the Russian Bolsheviks,

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and step by step by the other revolutionary Marxist elements and sections in every country, in proportion as they were able to break from the official parties. There was thus no question of the collapse of an impossible ideal or aspiration, which could not be fulfilled, but of a definite betrayal by the majority parties, for definite social reasons. The formula of the revolutionary working-class fight against war, and the transformation of imperialist war into social revolution, which constituted Lenin's greatest contribution to the decisions of the old Socialist International, was no paper emptiness, but the mighty seed of future growth; it became the rallying point and guiding light for the revolutionary Left in every country in the dark days of the war, led to the formation of the Zimmerwald grouping, and so, through the 1917 Revolution, to the Communist International. It is manifest that, had the entire Socialist International, with its twelve millions strength, carried out without hesitation its pledged line in 1914, not only would the imperialist war have been smashed at the outset, but the entire power of capitalism in Europe would have been overthrown, and we would be to-day engaged in the task of building up socialism over the greater part of the world, in place of the situation which exists to-day. The failure of the Socialist International in 1914 was the greatest historical failure of human progress. The hour for the ending of capitalism had struck; but the international working class was not ready. Only the partial victory of International Socialism in 1917 was able to redeem that failure and usher in the new era, the Socialist era; but that new era has now to fight a long and heavy battle against the renewed forces of world capitalism and imperialism, saved for a further lease of life by Social Democracy. This issue is at the heart of the world situation to-day. *To understand aright the failure of* 1914 *and the partial victory of* 1917 *is to reach the basic contradictory forces of the present world situation.*

THE correct understanding of the failure of 1914 is the condition of the successful fight against the new 1914 that is now approaching. But the answer to this question brings us to the root of the weakness of the old Second

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International, and to the basic issues which still confront, unsolved, the working class in Western Europe to-day. The old Second International represented in reality a compromise between contrary forces; and this compromise increasingly paralysed its action until the final collapse in 1914. The basis and framework was international revolutionary Marxism; but within this framework, as the movement developed under the conditions of the epoch of imperialism, there grew up a contrary force, which was in reality the reflection of imperialist influence on the privileged sections of the workers in Western Europe. This contrary force found its conscious expression in revisionism, reformism or opportunism; but the reality of its influence went very much further than its conscious expression, which was in name still condemned. The essence of this reality consisted in growing adaptation to the existing imperialist states. The phraseology of international Marxism still remained; but within this outer façade the working-class parties were growing up more and more as national parties on an increasingly legal basis, *i.e.*, on a basis of adaptation to the existing States, agitating for reforms within the existing order, tied by a thousand threads to their respective States, and weakening in their basic revolutionary aim. This situation could long continue up to 1914 as a gradually growing latent contradiction, as an inner controversy within the working-class movement, and as an unstable equilibrium. But with 1914 the break finally came, and opportunism was once and for all revealed as inevitably the betrayal of the working class.

WHY did the break inevitably come with the issue of war in 1914? Because the issue of war, just as it brings all the issues of capitalism to a head, brings all the issues of the class struggle to a head. It presents an "Either—Or." Either unity with the imperialist state in mutual slaughter of the working class. Or unity with the international working class in revolutionary struggle against imperialism. There is no middle course. On this rock the old Second International broke, as all opportunism must break. *If the interests of the working class are bound up with "their" capitalist State, then they must go to war in its "defence" against their fellow-workers.*

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This becomes the inescapable position alike of the Jingo Right and of the "Pacifist" Centre; in England, equally of Henderson and of MacDonald (who declared "Whatever our views may be of the origin of the war, we must go through with it," "Victory must be ours. England is not played out," &c.); in Germany, equally of the Right Wing Scheidemann and of the Left Centrist Kautsky; in France, equally of Right Wing Renaudel and of the Left Centrist Longuet. In the name of "national defence" the workers must kill one another for the plundering aims of rival world imperialism. Only the revolutionary line can break through this dilemma, and replace the sophistries of "offensive" or "defensive" wars, "national defence," &c., with which the war-Socialists of each country sought to justify their positions, by the real issue of imperialism or revolution, *i.e.*, that the interest of the workers does not consist in promoting the aims of their imperialist rulers, but in overthrowing their imperialist rulers, and that, only when they have won power, can the question of Socialist defence arise. Socialism, as Marx and Engels abundantly showed in theory and practice, does not deny "national" wars, *i.e.*, wars of national liberation, such as the colonial peoples to-day have to fight against their imperialist oppressors. But to apply the "national" conception to modern inter-imperialist wars is a mockery. The statesmen of the old Second International endeavoured to combine the conceptions of "national defence" and of "internationalism," which, under the conditions of the imperialist epoch, means to combine the service of capitalism and of the working class. In all the voluminous debates up to 1914 the issue was never cleared, but remained in a fog. But the war soon cut through the verbal jugglery and exposed the reality. *The war of* 1914-18 *demonstrated once and for all that internationalism can only be realised on the basis of the revolutionary working-class struggle, of revolutionary Marxism, and on no other basis.*

WHAT collapsed in 1914 was thus in reality not international Socialism (in the sense of revolutionary Marxism), but bourgeois pacifism which had eaten its way into the heart of the old Second International. For the

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essence of bourgeois pacifism is the combination of the profession of peace with the support of the existing capitalist régime, which is based on violence and war. Bourgeois pacifism is thus inevitably a contradiction, like bourgeois democracy. Bourgeois democracy professes the liberty and equality of all men; its reality is class slavery. Bourgeois pacifism professes the peace and brotherhood of all nations; its reality is imperialist domination and commercial competition, leading inevitably to war. Up to the point of war, bourgeois pacifism can indulge in wholesale protests, aspirations, eloquence, international congresses, judicial machinery for settling legal disputes, &c. So soon as war comes, and the reality of imperialism breaks through the flimsy texture, bourgeois pacifism can only join up with its state to which it belongs; for the alternative is the line of revolutionary struggle. This essential hypocrisy of all bourgeois pacifism was faithfully, if crudely, expressed by one of its most famous leaders, the American silver-tongued Bryan, who led the agitation against American entry into the war. In a telegram to a great anti-war meeting in Chicago in February, 1917, he declared:—

> *If it comes to war, then of course we shall support the Government; but up to that moment it is our most sacred duty to do everything that lies in our power to save the people from the horrors of war.*

Could the rôle of pacifism as the tool and servant of imperialism and war be more shortly expressed? First, harmless resolutions and manifestoes to draw the anti-war feelings of the masses into a useless channel; then, at the moment of war, inevitable betrayal.

BUT does this crudest and unconcealed hypocrisy of bourgeois pacifism differ one iota from the attitude of the "Socialists" of the Second International or the Amsterdam Trade Union International? Let us see what Kautsky had to say in October, 1914, representing the "pacifist Left" Wing of German Social Democracy:—

> If in spite of all the efforts of Social Democracy a war will break out after all, then each nation will have to do its best to save its skin. *Hence it follows that the Social Democracy of all nations will have the same right or the same duty to take part in this defence, and none of them need reproach the other.*—(Kautsky in *Die Neue Zeit*, October 2, 1914.)

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A splendid "right" of the proletarians of the united International to slay one another; and "none of them need reproach the other"! This is the essential position of the British Labour Party, the German Social Democracy and the other parties of the Second International to-day, except that they have in fact advanced very much further along the same line, beyond the mere support of war "if war breaks out," to the direct and active preparation of war in their rôle as capitalist governments. Or take the statement of the present Chairman of the Trades Union Congress, Ben Tillett, at the Vienna Congress of the Amsterdam Trade Union International in 1924:—

> We must fight more energetically than hitherto against war. Till now the Communists were the only energetic opponents of war, we must not leave them this monopolist position. We must take timely preventive measures against war, for *if a war breaks out, every one of us stands by his own country.*

To-day, as noted, Social Democracy has advanced far beyond this position; they are no longer merely the accomplices of war, but the active preparers of war. But the root of the whole tree was fully displayed in the hour of 1914; the rest is only the inevitable sequel.

THE essential lesson of 1914 is thus that the fight against war, the fight for internationalism, can only be fought as part of the revolutionary working-class struggle against imperialism and for the overthrow of the existing imperialist régime. Without this, all talk of the fight against war is idle deception. But the revolutionary working-class struggle can only be conducted by a revolutionary working-class movement, by a working-class movement which already in time of "peace" breaks all ties with the bourgeoisie, which is led by a revolutionary party, which is prepared for the conditions of illegality, which sets before itself the aim of the overthrow of the capitalist state. Without this, all talk of "war on war," &c., even the most revolutionary sounding, is criminal hypocrisy. This is most clearly shown by the whole discussion and subsequent practical experience of the formula of the International General Strike against war, which is still occasionally played with

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as a slogan by the Second International and Amsterdam International. This formula was put forward in the old Socialist International by the British and French sections, that is, by two of the most backward and opportunist sections, and reached its fullest discussion over the Keir Hardie-Vaillant amendment at the Copenhagen Congress in 1910. It was opposed by the German and Austrian sections, and finally shelved for "inquiry." Does this mean that the British and French Socialists were "more revolutionary"? On the contrary. It was precisely because they were less revolutionary that they were able to play with such revolutionary phrases. French pre-war Socialism was notoriously rotten with opportunism and parliamentarism; Keir Hardie and the Labour Party were actually supporting in thinly veiled coalition the Liberal Government of war-preparation. On the basis of such practice, corrupting and paralysing through and through the most elementary action of the working class, to talk light-heartedly of "promising" beforehand the highest forms of revolutionary mass action, only attainable on the basis of prolonged revolutionary agitation and a rising wave, and inevitably reaching, if seriously persisted in, to civil war and the struggle for power (as even the limited example of the incomplete General Strike of 1926 already showed), was nothing but criminal deception and frivolousness and wilful refusal to face the real fight, as the subsequent experience plentifully revealed. It was precisely the British and French Socialists, from right to left, who failed most completely in the war, and showed themselves, even in the Left Wing groups of opposition to the war, most completely unprepared and helpless to raise a fight. It was precisely the Russian and German Marxists who raised the serious mass fight.

AND when to-day the reformists, with the blood of the workers upon their banners, in alliance with counter-revolution, maintaining capitalist governments and capitalist war preparations, again dare to talk light-heartedly of the international general strike as the magic formula to "prevent war," in order to conceal their own betrayal of the real struggle and lull the workers to sleep, we would say to them: "First

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show yourselves capable of some more elementary tasks. Break with the bourgeoisie. End industrial peace. End Mondism. End the governments of capitalist coalition. Vote against war credits. Smash the Trade Union Act by a general strike. Lead the working-class struggle against capitalism. And when you have shown yourselves ready for this, then and then only will it be time to talk with you of revolutionary mass action in the highest and most difficult fight of all, the fight against war, which, seriously tackled, can mean nothing less than the advance to civil war and the revolutionary struggle for power." Only on the basis and practice of the revolutionary class struggle can there be meaning in the conception of the general strike against war; then and then only the general strike can take its place as a weapon and a stage, according to the degree of ripeness, in the total struggle. For those Socialists, of whatever tendency, who are serious in their desire to realise the general strike against war, the test of that seriousness is ready to hand to-day in their preparedness to co-operate in the united front of the International Red Day, the preparatory action of the working class against war.

UP to this point we have concentrated attention deliberately on the lessons of 1914, because this is the indispensable first basis and starting point for correct policy to-day. But there could be no greater mistake than to imagine that the new 1914 will simply prove a repetition of the old in some further variant. The new 1914 will differ from the old as much as 1914 differed from 1870. The whole world conditions have profoundly changed and advanced at a gigantic pace. The basic situation of both world capitalism and the revolution has radically changed. The existence of the Soviet Union over one-sixth of the earth, and the existence of the Communist International, alike transform the situation. The struggle of the colonial peoples is to-day no longer a subsidiary, but a primary factor. The rôle of Social Democracy has entered on to a new and more advanced stage. The character of the coming war, whose outlines we can still only doubtfully discern, is likely to differ basically, not only in technique, but in its whole social and political form, from

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all that have preceded it. Completely new issues confront us. Our task is to prepare ourselves to face these new issues. Once we have mastered the lessons of 1914, once we have gathered up the experience of the international movement to the present point and the teachings of Marxism and Leninism, our task is to carry these forward to meet the new conditions and the new world situation in which we find ourselves.

WHAT is the essence of the new world situation? Its first and most important character is that the struggle of world imperialism and the revolution has entered on to a new stage. The struggle is no longer only social within each country, but is at the same time also geographical. The war of 1870 gave rise to the Commune. The war of 1904-5 gave rise to the First Russian Revolution. The 1912 Manifesto of the old Socialist International laid stress on these two forerunners to point the way to what should be the outcome of the coming world war. But both these were still only episodes, and indications of the future. From the war of 1914-18 the world Socialist revolution has for the first time won its fortress in the Soviet Union in the midst of the capitalist world and has maintained it for twelve years. This gives at once the decisive character to the present period and the coming struggle. The primary aim of world capitalism is to destroy that fortress. The primary aim of the international working class is to maintain and extend it, to defeat the attacks of the capitalists on the Socialist fortress, and to create new Socialist fortresses in union with the first, leading on along the path towards the future world union of Soviet Republics. Whatever the starting point of the future world war, this character is likely to become dominant. In the most likely event of a direct imperialist attack on the Soviet Union, which will be supplemented by the attempted fomenting of counter-revolutionary war within it, at the same time as the workers in the imperialist countries will be fighting against the attack, the inner war and outer war take on a new and closer unity: it becomes no longer a war between *nations*, between "England" and "Russia," but between *classes*, between imperialism and the international working class. Such a process

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was already foreshadowed in its first primitive form in the years of intervention, and especially after the collapse of the inter-imperialist war, in 1919-21, when the inter-imperialist war passed into the background before the issue of revolution and counter-revolution in Europe. *To prepare the consciousness of the widest numbers of workers for this character of the coming struggle, to replace chauvinism and bourgeois pacifism by class-thinking and action on the lines of international working-class solidarity, is our first and foremost task.*

IN the second place, the character of the antagonisms giving rise to war has changed. Not only has the first and foremost antagonism of to-day, that of imperialism against the Soviet Union, no counterpart in the pre-1914 world, but the whole world situation has advanced to larger and more complicated issues. In the pre-1914 world the war situation centred round the six European Powers, and, more particularly, round the conflict of the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance, which in its turn centred round the dominant guiding thread of the Anglo-German antagonism. The question was not of *what* war, but *when*. To-day, not only have the wider issues extended from Europe to the world, but, in place of the previous single dominating inter-imperialist antagonism, there run parallel three basically differing types of antagonism, first, between imperialism and the Soviet Union, second, between the rival imperialist Powers and in particular the Anglo-American rivalry, and third, between imperialism and the colonial peoples, now rapidly advancing along the path of liberation.

EACH of these issues complicates the others. A whole series of partial struggles, small-scale wars and civil wars in every quarter of the globe during the past ten years, each reflecting wider antagonisms (the war of France and Spain on Morocco, of England on Afghanistan, of the Chinese Revolution, of the Chinese Counter-Revolution on the Soviet Union, of the United States on Nicaragua, of Bolivia-Paraguay on Poland-Lithuania, of the civil wars in Afghanistan or China, to take a handful of examples of differing types), as well as a whole

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series of diplomatic incidents, explosions, sharp breaks and turns (the Rhur plunder expedition, the Arcos Raid and Anglo-Soviet rupture, the Anglo-French Naval Pact, the British-American conversations, the series of counter-revolutionary dictatorships in Europe, to take again a handful of examples of differing types), all in varying forms foreshadow the gathering larger issues and future world conflict. Again, the alliances and groupings are shifting, and reflect the instability of the whole present period of capitalism. Only in proportion as partial stabilisation has been effected, has the central Anglo-American antagonism come increasingly to dominate the situation, and even here the groupings around it are still fluid. The League of Nations represents one type of war alliance on the basis of Versailles, the point of which may eventually be turned either against the Soviet Union or against America. The Pan-American Federation and Kellogg Pact reflect alternative attempted groupings. The French scheme of the United States of Europe, if successful, may build up a new combination as a third factor against both England and America, as well as against the Soviet Union. These varied combinations are all still unstable and in process of development. But the gathering intensity of imperialist economic conflict, following on the advance of technique, rationalisation and mass-production, forces the pace even more rapidly forward. What becomes increasingly clear is that, with the ever more interlocked character of the world situation (and not least with the new "peace" mechanisms of the League of Nations, Kellogg Pacts, &c., guaranteeing to universalise the future war), a wider conflict, once it develops, will rapidly extend to the whole world and draw into its wake the thousand waiting issues in every part.

IN the third place, Social Democracy has advanced to a new stage. It is no longer merely the passive accomplice of imperialism and betrayer of working-class solidarity. It is now the direct spokesman, and even an integral leading force, of imperialism and direct preparer of war (Paul-Boncour Militarisation Act, Labour Government armaments building, &c.). In 1914 the collapse of the Second International resounded through the world. If now on the outbreak of war the present

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Second International were to break up, the fact would hardly be noticed; for it is now, visibly, no longer an instrument of peace even in appearance, but an instrument of imperialism (Kautsky's recent pamphlet on the Armaments question, insisting on the right of Germany to equal armaments with the other Powers, illustrates the current trend). But in fact the Second International is not even threatened with serious break-up in the event of war to-day, since it represents in fact a relatively narrow imperialist grouping on the basis of the League of Nations and the interests of Western European imperialism and, in particular, the principal agency of imperialist preparation of war on the Soviet Union. Kautsky's call for "foreign intervention" in the case of a question of war involving a country where "dictatorship" exists, is as open in his recent pamphlet as in his previous publication on *The International and Soviet Russia*. With this may be compared the Labour Government's recent Air Force demonstration of the bombing of a Soviet port, under the form of an assumed war against a country which refuses to submit itself to the League of Nations. And it is in connection with this principal war aim of present imperialism that lies the principal significance of the present Second International. The old pre-1914 Labour Party was simply the passive accomplice of the Liberal Government which prepared war. The present Labour Government is the direct preparer of war, and occupies the position of that pre-1914 Liberal Government.

THIS changed position of Social Democracy throws on the working class new conditions of struggle, and the need of new forms of organisation and action, not only for the immediate economic and political struggle, as has already been driven home by the experience of the past two years, but above all for the coming supreme fight, the fight against imperialist war. Just as in the economic struggle, we have seen that we have to fight against not only the machine of the state and the employers, but equally against the machine of Social Democracy in the working-class organisations, this applies with a hundredfold greater force to the fight against war. The fight against war will have to be fought against conditions of intensified illegality

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and repression both from the state machine and from social democracy. For capitalism has also learnt the lessons of 1914-18, and above all of 1917. Capitalism has learnt by experience the Marxist lesson of the connection of war and revolution. The bourgeoisie know that the menace to their war plans lies, not in the phrases of pacifism, which they bless, or in the elaborate machinery of the Leagues of Nations and the Peace Pacts, which serve their war purposes, but in the revolutionary struggle of the working class. And they have prepared their machine of coercion with a completeness exceeding all the experience of the past war. The incidents of May Day (in Paris 4,000 revolutionary workers were arrested overnight to prevent the demonstration of the workers and cut all the lines of their organisation, and in Berlin the police and their armed cars swept through the streets shooting at random at the unarmed workers) were only a foretaste of the conditions of the future struggle against war. Against these conditions we shall have to fight. The revolutionary working-class struggle will rise the stronger against these conditions, and will smash its way through all the machinery of coercion, as it smashed its way through the machine of Tsarism. But these conditions of struggle we shall have to face, and be prepared to face, or bow the neck beneath the yoke of imperialism and imperialist war. The talk of peace and "war on war" is cheap to-day and plentiful on every side. To all those who make this talk to-day, we would say: "Face this fight, the revolutionary fight against the machine of capitalism and imperialism, or drop the talk of peace."

R. P. D.

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FACING THE WAR-MAKERS

By W. GALLACHER

THE question of war is, or should be, in the forefront of all our immediate activities. Day by day the evidences of war preparations and war alliances are more and more coming out into the open. Never was there greater need of working-class activity, yet so far as this vital issue is concerned we must frankly face the fact that the workers are almost entirely indifferent. They must be awakened to the seriousness of the war danger.

This will be no easy matter, for the screen of peace is being assiduously constructed so that the workers may not see the preparations going on behind. They take the protestations of Labour Leaders and other " Peace " advocates at their face value, failing to realise that such " Peace " protestations are an essential part of war preparation. It is this Peace propaganda which gives the war-mongers the opportunity of swinging the masses of the workers over to their support when war is declared. It is so easy in such a period of national excitement to satisfy the workers that British policy was a " Peace " policy and that war was forced upon Britain by an aggressive enemy. It is essential to expose the fraudulent nature of Capitalist " Peace " manœuvres and drive home to the minds of working men and women the lessons to be drawn from the existing situation of terrific struggle for the markets of the world, rising tide of colonial revolt and steady advance of social construction in the First Workers' Republic.

In the fight for markets all the Capitalist countries are engaged, but standing out as the principal protagonists are Britain and America. We are often told by shallow-minded pacifists that war between Britain and America is impossible. We speak the same language, these people tell us, and that itself is sufficient to prevent serious misunderstanding and to ensure everlasting peace. Nominally, of course, we do speak the same

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language, but in the actual fact of business life an entirely different language is spoken. Americam Imperialism speaks the language of the Dollar, British Imperialism speaks the language of the Pound. And there can be no question about the fact that war is raging to-day in every part of the world between the Dollar and the Pound.

In South America, in Canada, in Australia, in the East, as on the Continent of Europe, the dollar forces its way. The British Imperialists feel its attack everywhere. When Beaverbrook launches his campaign for "Imperial Crusaders," he, and those he represents, are declaring war on American finance. "Win back the Dominions from the menace of American penetration," would be their slogan, if they dared come out openly. Of course, we have just recently witnessed very friendly exchanges between MacDonald, the representative of British social democracy, and Dawes, the representative of American high finance ; they even planted a tree of Peace. All very fine for the films and for deluding the workers, but having no other value than as a temporary Armistice for the purpose of allowing time to deal with the Workers' Republic before coming to a show-down on the question of World Domination.

So long as the question of war with America is in its present stage, MacDonald will be allowed to go around mouthing vague indefinite generalities. But the American Imperialists are not deluded. They are not looking for vague moral precepts. They have an abundance of such from quacks on their own doorstep. The American Imperialists are looking for profit, for markets that provide the profit, for spheres of influence, for colonies.

Can MacDonald give them these ? Only at the expense of the British Empire, and the task of the MacDonaldites is to save the Empire, not to give it away. Saving the Empire, the Slave Plantation of the Plunder-Gang, means War with America.

But while the fight for the market rages, all of the combatants are faced with the fact that one-sixth of the world's surface has been taken out of the orbit of Capitalist exploitation and is being used by the workers for the construction of Socialist Society. This is a serious menace to the stability of Capitalism in two respects. In the first place, it means a very great restriction of a world market,

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already too small. At the moment, however, the defeat of the Workers' Government and the re-establishment of capitalism in Russia would provide a measure of relief. The ultimate result would be the same. For, with Russia developed along Capitalist lines, the problem of markets would become more acute than ever before. But it is immediate relief that is wanted, and as Russia would provide this, all of the imperialist countries are united in their desire to destroy the Workers' Government.

There is another—more serious aspect : capitalism with its deadly exploitation and starvation of the workers cannot face the competition of a workers' form of society. In the early years of the Workers' Government the competition was not serious. But now, with the progress that has been made in Russia, comparisons favourable to capitalism cannot any more be drawn, and with the completion of the five years' plan, the comparison will be very obviously the other way about. The five years' plan will explode all the vain pretensions of social-democracy. So social-democracy openly joins forces with capitalism, for the sabotage or destruction of the First Workers' Republic.

True, America threatens the British Empire, and will sooner or later force the issue to the arbitrament of war. But before that day Britain must get her rear protected. The workers at home must be tied down through Mondism or other means to complete submission. It is impossible to go to war while the workers are in a position to rise in revolt before the war has got properly under way. Once the war is well started, then the most extreme measures can be taken to suppress any projected rising, but in the earlier stages passivity on the part of those who have not been swung over to rabid patriotism is absolutely essential.

Now while in Britain the home workers are fairly well under the control of the Labour leaders and the Trade Union bureaucrats, in India, the seat of Empire, the situation is entirely different. There the tide of revolt is steadily rising, and, in the event of war with America, would most certainly express itself in an open revolutionary struggle for complete independence. India is therefore an outstanding danger point in the rear of British Imperialism. Before Britain can even hope to face America, India must be crushed down into complete submission. But this task is an

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impossible one while the example of Russia stands out before the exploited workers and peasants of the East. To the Imperialist-ridden masses of these countries the victories of the workers and peasants of Russia bring new hope and new inspiration. What the Russian masses have achieved by heroic endeavour they also can achieve.

America's immediate threat is its penetration of the Dominions and its general attack on the world's markets. But the threat from Russia is the example it sets to India, and to the workers as a whole. If India is to be retained, if the Empire is to be kept going, the Soviet Workers' Government must be destroyed. MacDonald and the lackeys of capitalism who constitute the Labour Government will do their utmost in this direction. *The danger of war against the Soviet Union is an immediate danger.* The whole diplomacy of capitalism is centred on this first task.

In Britain, the Labour Government will enter into negotiations which are ostensibly directed towards recognition of Russia, but in actual fact will be concerned with an attack on the Communist International. Never was there a time when greater watchfulness, greater activity, was necessary. Steadily, the enemies of the workers gather their forces and make their preparations for war. We must go to the factories, and to the Trade Union branches and arouse the masses of the workers. We must shatter the illusions that are so sedulously cultivated by the Labour leaders and their Left apologists. These latter will be exceptionally dangerous. Already we have Maxton and Cook, fresh from their election betrayal of the workers into the hands of MacDonald and Capitalism, posing as the champions of Indian freedom, while actually they are endeavouring to lead the Indian movement into "safe" Parliamentary channels.

Against all such as these the Communist Party will fight. Placing its faith in the workers, and the workers alone, it will arouse them to the true meaning of present day events. It will organise them as it arouses them, swinging them into action through mass demonstrations and strikes, and so preparing them for the great task of destroying capitalist war by the Workers' war against Capitalism.

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SOCIALISM AND WAR

By N. LENIN

[*The following article comprises the first two chapters of a pamphlet with the above title written by Lenin in collaboration with Zinoviev in August*, 1915. *The pamphlet was prepared for the Zimmerwald Conference, but technical reasons delayed its appearance until after Zimmerwald. German, French and Russian editions were illegally distributed during the war by the Zimmerwald left groups. The translation below has been prepared specially for the* LABOUR MONTHLY *from the Second Russian edition of Lenin's works, Vol. XVIII. The reader should bear in mind throughout that in August*, 1915, *Russia was still under Tsardom and that there was still no Communist International in existence to carry on the traditions of revolutionary social-democracy.*]

SOCIALISTS have always condemned the wars that have occurred between nations as a barbaric and beastly thing. Nevertheless, our attitude to war is fundamentally different from that of bourgeois friends of peace (pacifists) and anarchists. From the former we are to be distinguished in that we understand the causal interconnection of wars with the class struggle inside the country, and understand that the abolition of wars is impossible without the abolition of class society and the victory of socialism ; we are further to be distinguished from them in that we regard civil wars, *i.e.*, wars of the oppressed classes against the oppressors, of slaves against slave owners, of serfs against landowners, of wage-earners against capitalists, as lawful, progressive and necessary. As Marxists, we are to be distinguished as much from the pacifists as from the anarchists in that we consider necessary an historical analysis, from the standpoint of Marxist dialectical-historical method, of each war in detail. In the course of history there have been not a few wars which, in spite of all cruelty, bestiality, suffering and torture inevitably associated with any war, were progressive, *i.e.*, they contributed to the development of humanity, inasmuch as they helped to destroy particularly harmful and reactionary institutions (for example, absolutism and serfdom), the most barbaric despotisms in Europe (Turkish and Russian).

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Consequently it is necessary to analyse the historical peculiarities of the present war.

Historical Types of War in Modern Times

The French revolution opened a new epoch in the history of mankind. From this time up to the Paris Commune, bourgeois-progressive national wars of emancipation formed one of the types of war. In other words, the main content and the historical significance of these wars was the overthrow of absolutism and feudalism, its undermining, the shaking off of the yoke of a foreign ruler. Precisely on this account they were progressive wars and all honest revolutionary democrats and socialists during such wars always hoped for the success of that country (*i.e.*, of that bourgeoisie) which was contributing towards the overthrow or weakening of the most dangerous supports of feudalism, absolutism and national oppression. For example, the revolutionary wars of France contained also an element of plunder and conquest of foreign lands by the French, but that does not alter in the slightest the fundamental historic significance of these wars, which shattered and destroyed the feudalism and abolutism of the old serf-owning Europe. In the Franco-Prussian war, Germany robbed France, but this does not alter the basic historical character of this war, which freed many million Germans from feudal dismembering and oppression by two despots, the Russian Tsar and Napoleon III.

The Distinction Between Defensive and Aggressive Wars

The epoch 1789-1871 left behind deep traces and revolutionary memories. Up to the throwing off of feudalism, absolutism and foreign rule, there could be no talk of the development of the proletarian struggle for socialism. When the socialists spoke of the justification of " wars of defence " in relation to the wars of such an epoch, they always meant just these aims, *i.e.*, the revolution againstm ediaevalism and serfdom. The socialists understood by a " defensive war " always one which was " *just* " in this respect (Wilhelm Liebknecht on occasion also used the term in this way*).

* Lenin has in mind Liebknecht's speech at the Erfurt Congress of the German Social Democratic Party in 1891.

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Only in this sense have socialists recognised the lawfulness, progressiveness and justice, of "defence of the fatherland," and so they do to-day. If to-morrow, for example, Morocco were to declare war against France, or India against Britain, or Persia and China against Russia, these would be "justifiable" "defensive" wars independently of who had begun them, and every socialist would hope for the victory of the oppressed dependent states over the oppressing, slave-owning predatory "Great Powers."

But let us suppose that an owner of a hundred slaves carries on a war with an owner of two hundred slaves for a more "fair" division of the slaves. It is clear that the application of the conception of "defence of the fatherland" or "defensive war" to this case would be historically false and practically a sheer deception of the uneducated common people and petty bourgeoisie by clever slave-owners. In precisely this fashion does the imperialist bourgeoisie betray the people by means of national ideology and the conception of defence of the fatherland in the present war between the slave owners, in a war which aims at the maintenance and extension of slavery.

The Present War is an Imperialist War

Almost all recognise that the present war is an imperialist war. But for the most part this understanding is distorted or only applied to one side, or the possibility is conceded that this war can have a bourgeois-progressive national-emancipatory significance.

Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalist development, which was first reached in the twentieth century. The old national states, without the formation of which feudalism could not be abolished, have become too narrow for capitalism. Capitalism has gone so far on the path of concentration that whole branches of industry have been seized by syndicates, trusts or groups of capitalist millionaires and almost the whole globe has been partitioned among these "rulers of capital," either in the form of colonies, or by the envelopment of the lands overseas by a thousand threads of financial exploitation. Competition and free trade were replaced by the tendency towards monopoly, towards conquest of spheres for investment of capital and sources of raw material, &c. From a liberator of the nations in the period of the struggle against

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feudalism, capitalism in the imperialist epoch has become the greatest oppressor of nations. Formerly progressive, it has become now conservative. It has developed the productive forces so far that mankind stands before either transition to socialism or before a year, or even a decade-long, war of the great powers for the artificial preservation of capitalism by means of colonies, monopolies, privileges and all kinds of national oppression.

The War of the Big Slave-owners for the Maintenance of Slavery

To explain the significance of imperialism, the following data are given on the division of the world among the great powers (*i.e.*, the powers which have been most successful in robbery) :—

Figures in Millions

Great Powers	Colonies				Motherland	
	1876		1914		1914	
	Square kms.	Pop.	Square kms.	Pop.	Square kms.	Pop.
England	22·5	251·9	33·5	393·5	·3	46·5
Russia	17·0	15·9	17·4	33·2	5·4	136·2
France	·9	6·0	10·6	55·5	·5	39·6
Germany . .	—	—	2·9	12·3	·5	64·9
Japan	—	—	·3	19·2	·4	53·0
U.S.A.	—	—	·3	9·7	9·4	97·0
6 Great Powers . .	40.4	273.8	65.0	523.4	16.5	437.2

This shows how the nations, which in the period from 1789 to 1871 marched at the head of the struggle for freedom, have now on the basis of highly developed and over-ripe capitalism become converted into oppressors of the majority of all the peoples and nations of the whole globe. Between 1876 and 1914 the six " Great Powers " have plundered 25 million square kilometres, *i.e.*, a territory two and a-half times as large as Europe. Six states oppress *more than half a milliard* (523 millions) inhabitants of the colonies. For every four inhabitants of the " Great Powers " there are five in " their " colonies. And it is well known to all that the colonies were conquered by fire and sword, that the colonial peoples are treated like cattle, and that they are exploited in a thousand ways (through export of capital, concessions, cheating in sale of goods,

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subjection to the power of the "ruling" nation, &c., &c.).

The French and British bourgeoisie deceive the people by maintaining that they are carrying on the war for the liberation of Belgium and other peoples. In reality, they are carrying it on in order to keep in their grasp the colonies that they have stolen in such quantity. The German imperialists would immediately liberate Belgium if the British and French would "fairly" divide the colonies with them. The peculiarity of the position is that in this war the fate of the colonies is being decided by war on the continent of Europe. From the standpoint of bourgeois "justice," "national freedom" (or the right of nations to existence), Germany would be completely in the right against Britain and France because it owns "too few" colonies. Its enemies oppress a greater number of peoples than Germany does, and in the kingdom of its ally, Austria, the oppressed Slavs enjoy more freedom than in Tsarist Russia, this veritable "prison house of nations." *But Germany fights not for the liberation but for the oppression of nations.* It is not the duty of socialists to help the younger and stronger robber (Germany) to plunder the older robber already fed to satiety.

The socialist must utilise the fight between the robbers in order to overthrow them all. With this object, the socialist must in the first place tell the people the truth, viz., that this war is in a threefold sense a war of slave holders for the strengthening of the worst slavery. Firstly, it is a war for the strengthening of slavery in the colonies by a "fairer" division and by a further more "united" exploitation of them. Secondly, it is a war for the strengthening of the oppression of foreign peoples in the countries of the Great Powers themselves, for both Austria and Russia (Russia in a much higher and worse degree than Austria) only exist on the basis of this suppression, which they want to strengthen by the war. Thirdly, it is a war for strengthening and extending wage slavery, for the proletariat is split and driven under, while the capitalists win and enrich themselves in the war, in the course of which they inflame national prejudices and strengthen reaction, which in all—even the most free republication countries—has come to the forefront.

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War is the Continuation of Politics by other (violent) Means

This famous phrase comes from one of the clearest and most thorough-going military authors, Clausewitz. Marxists have always justly held it to be a statement of the theoretical foundation of views on the significance of every war. Marx and Engels always regarded wars from precisely this standpoint.

Apply this conception to the present war. It will be seen that in the course of decades, almost for half-a-century, the Government and ruling classes in England, France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Russia carried on a colonial policy of robbery, brought foreign nations into subjection and oppressed the labour movement. Exactly this policy, and it alone, is being continued in the present war. In Austria and Russia especially, the policy alike in peace time and in war has consisted in the oppression of nations and not their liberation. On the other hand, we see in China, Persia, India and other dependent countries during the course of the last decades a policy of awakening of tens and hundreds of millions of men to national life, to freedom from the yoke of the reactionary " Great " Powers. War on this historical ground can even now be bourgeois-progressive and national-emancipatory.

It suffices to consider the present war from the standpoint of the continuation of the policy of the " Great " Powers and of the chief classes inside them in order to see at once what a crying historical falsehood and hypocrisy is the opinion that one can defend the thought of " defence of the fatherland."

The Example of Belgium

The social chauvinists of the Triple Entente (now the Quadruple Alliance) like most of all to appeal to the example of Belgium. But this example declares against them. The German imperialists have shamlessly violated the neutrality of Belgium, as has been done everywhere and always by war-making States, which tread underfoot *all* treaties and engagements if they find it necessary. Let us suppose that all States which have an interest in the preservation of international treaties were to declare war against Germany with the demand for the liberation of Belgium and its compensation. In this case the sympathy of socialists would naturally be on the side of the enemies of Germany. But the matter

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is that the Triple Entente (and the Quadruple Alliance) are *not* carrying on the war on account of Belgium. This is very well known, and is not spoken of only through hypocrisy.

Britain plunders the German colonies and Turkey, Russia plunders Galicia and Turkey, France wants the conquest of Alsace-Lorraine and even the left bank of the Rhine, a treaty is concluded with Italy for the division of spoils (Albania and Asia Minor), and haggling goes on also with Bulgaria and Roumania for the division of spoils. On the basis of the present war, of the present governments, it is only possible to help Belgium by helping to strangle Austria or Turkey, &c. What has this to do with "defence of the Fatherland"? In this lies precisely the peculiarity of the imperialist war, of a war between reactionary capitalist historically-outlined States, which is carried on for the purpose of oppression of other peoples. Whoever justifies participation in this war, perpetuates imperialist suppression of nations. Whoever promotes the utilisation of the present difficult situation of the Governments for the purpose of the fight for the social revolution, defends the true freedom of all peoples, which can only be realised in socialism.

What is Russia Fighting For?

In Russia, capitalist imperialism of the most modern type has found its complete expression in the policy of Tsarism towards Persia, Manchuria and Mongolia. But, taken as a whole, there predominates in Russia military and feudal imperialism. Nowhere in the world is the oppression of the majority of the inhabitants so great as in Russia: the Great Russians form only 43 per cent. of the population, *i.e.*, less than half, and all others are deprived of rights as of "foreign origin." Of the 120 millions of the Russian population, about 100 millions are without rights and oppressed. Tsarism carries on the war with the object of the conquest of Galicia and the final suppression of the Ukrainian freedom movement, with the object of conquering Armenia and Constantinople, &c.

Tsarism sees in the war a means of diverting the growing dissatisfaction inside the country and suppressing the growing revolutionary movement. At the present time, for every two Great

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Russians there are between two and three of "alien" race without rights. By means of war, Tsarism seeks to increase the number of peoples oppressed by Russia, to seal their oppression and so to weaken also the struggle for freedom on the part of the great Russians. The possibility of oppressing and plundering other peoples promotes economic backwardness; for very often, instead of the development of productive forces, semi-feudal plundering of the "alien" races provides the source of revenue. In this way the war on the part of Russia has a pronounced reactionary and anti-liberating character.

What is Social-Chauvinism?

Social-chauvinism is the foundation of the conception of "defence of the Fatherland" on the present war. From this conception is derived further the renunciation of the class struggle during the war (voting of war credits, &c.). *In reality, the social-patriots conduct an anti-proletarian bourgeois policy*, for in reality they stand not for the defence of the Fatherland in the sense of a struggle against subjection by a foreign ruler, but they defend the "right" of one or other of the Great Powers to plunder the colonies and oppress foreign peoples. The social chauvinists repeat the bourgeois deception of the people, as if the war was being carried on with the object of defending the existence and freedom of nations, and in this way they range themselves on the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. To the social-chauvinists belong both those who defend and protect the governments and the bourgeoisie of *one* of the groups of war making world powers, and those who, like Kautsky, recognise the right of socialists of "all" warring countries to "defence of their Fatherland." Inasmuch as social-chauvinism in reality defends the special rights and privileges, plundering and oppression of "its own" (or any imperialist bourgeoisie), it represents a complete betrayal of all socialist principles and of the decision of the socialist international congress of Bâsle.

The Bâsle Manifesto

The manifesto on war unanimously adopted at Bâsle in 1907 applies precisely to this war between Germany and Britain with their present allies which broke out in 1914. The manifesto declares

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directly that no popular interest can justify this war, which will be conducted "for the profit of the capitalists and in the interest of the ruling dynasties" on the basis of the imperialist predatory policy of the Great Powers. The manifesto expressly declares that the war is dangerous for the "Governments" (without any exception), it points to their dread of the "proletarian revolution," and points expressly to the example of the commune of 1871 and the example of October and December, 1905, *i.e.*, to the *examples of revolution and civil war*.

In this way, the Bâsle manifesto lays down precisely for the present war the tactic of revolutionary struggle of the workers on an international scale against their own governments, the tactic of the proletarian revolution. The Bâsle manifesto repeats the words of the Stuttgart resolution : *that in case of outbreak of war, socialists are pledged to utilise the "economic and political crisis" occasioned by the war in order to "hasten the fall of capitalist society," i.e., it demands the utilisation of the difficult position of the Governments caused by the war and the mobilisation of the masses of the people for the social revolution.*

The policy of the social-chauvinists, their defence of the war with bourgeois arguments about "liberation," their recognition of "defence of the Fatherland," the voting of war credits, the entry into ministries, &c., is a direct betrayal of socialism, a betrayal which can only be explained, as we will see below, by the victory of opportunism and of national-liberal labour policy in the majority of the socialist parties of Europe.

The False Appeal to Marx and Engels

The Russian social-chauvinists (with Plechanov at the head) make appeal to the tactics of Marx in the war of 1870. German social-chauvinists (like Lensch, Dand and Co.) make appeal to the declaration of Engels in the year 1891 in relation to the duty of defence of the Fatherland for the German socialists in case of a simultaneous war with Russia and France. Finally, the social-chauvinists of the type of Kautsky, who wish to reconcile and show the justification for all parts of international social-chauvinism, base themselves on the fact that Marx and Engels, although they condemned wars, nevertheless in the period from 1845-55 until

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1870-71 and 1876-77 always took up the side of one of the war-making states when once war had broken out.

All these appeals constitute a shameless falsification of the views of Marx and Engels for the benefit of the bourgeoisie and of opportunism, just as the writings of the anarchists, Guillaume and Co., falsify the views of Marx and Engels in order to white-wash anarchism. The war of 1870-71 was, up to the fall Napoleon III, progressive on the part of Germany, for Napoleon III had for years, together with the Tsar, oppressed Germany and supported its feudal dismemberment. When the war was converted into a plundering of France (the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine), Marx and Engels unmitigatedly condemned Germany. At the outbreak of the war also, Marx and Engels were in agreement with the refusal of Bebel and Liebknecht to vote war credits and they advised the social democrats not to unite with the bourgeoisie but to defend the independent class interests of the proletariat.

To transfer the estimation of this bourgeois-progressive and national-emancipatory war to the present imperialist war is to do violence to the truth. The same thing applies even more to the war of the year 1854-55 and all the other wars of the nineteenth century at a time when there existed in all the warring countries neither modern imperialism, nor mature objective conditions for socialism, nor socialist mass parties, *i.e.*, at a time when all the conditions were absent on the basis of which the Bâsle manifesto laid down the revolutionary proletarian tactic to be followed *in the case of* a war between the Great Powers.

Whoever relies now on the relation of Marx to wars of the epoch of the *progressive* bourgeoisie and forgets the words of Marx, "the workers have no Fatherland"—words which are especially applicable to the *epoch of the reactionary, outlived bourgeoisie*, the epoch of social revolution—whoever does this, shamelessly falsifies Marx and substitutes a bourgeois for a socialist point of view.

The Collapse of the Second International

The socialists of all countries solemnly declared at Bâsle in 1912, that they regard the coming European war as the "criminal" and reactionary work of *all* governments, which must hasten the

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collapse of capitalism and inevitably give birth to the revolution against it. The war broke out, the crisis arrived. The majority of the social democratic parties pursued instead of a revolutionary tactic, a reactionary one, placing themselves on the side of their Governments and their bourgeoisie. This betrayal of socialism signifies the collapse of the Second International (1889-1914) and we must take account of that which caused this collapse, which gave birth to social chauvinism and which gave it its power.

Social-Chauvinism is Perfected Opportunism

During the whole course of the epoch of the Second International there went on everywhere inside the social democratic parties a struggle between the revolutionary and opportunist wings. In a whole series of countries a split took place on these lines (England, Italy, Holland, Bulgaria). Not a single Marxist doubts that opportunism expresses bourgeois policy in the labour movement, the interests of the petty bourgeoisie and the union of an insignificant portion of "bourgeoisified" workers with "their" bourgeoisie against the interests of the mass of the proletarians, the mass of the oppressed.

The objective conditions at the end of the nineteenth century especially strengthened opportunism, converting the exploitation of bourgeois legality into servile worship of it, creating a small stratum consisting of the bureaucracy and aristocracy of the working class and attracting into the ranks of the social-democratic party many petty-bourgeois "travelling companions."

The war hastened this development, converting opportunism into social chauvinism, converting the secret alliance of the opportunists with the bourgeoisie into an open one. Further, the military authorities everywhere introduced a "state of war" and laid a muzzle on the working class. The old leaders of the workers passed almost completely into the camp of the bourgeoisie.

The economic basis of opportunism and social-chauvinism is one and the same: the interests of an insignificant stratum of workers and petty bourgeoisie who insist on their privileged position, on their "right" to the crumbs of the profits received by "their" national bourgeoisie owing to the plunder of foreign

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nations and the advantages derived from the position of being a Great Power.

The ideological-political content of opportunism and chauvinism is one and the same: class collaboration instead of class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary means of struggle, support of one's "own" government in its difficult position instead of utilising its desperate situation for the revolution. Taking into account all the European countries as a whole, and disregarding the attitude of individuals (even if very influential), it becomes apparent that it is precisely the opportunist *tendency* that has become the most important support of social-chauvinism, and from the camp of the revolutionaries one hears almost everywhere a more or less determined protest against it. If, for example, one takes the grouping of tendencies at the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress of 1907, it will be seen that international Marxism was against Imperialism while international opportunism, on the other hand, already at that time came out in support of it.

Unity with opportunism is a union of the workers with "their" national bourgeoisie and a splitting of the international revolutionary working class.

In the earlier epoch before the war, opportunism, although regarded as a "deviation" or an "exaggeration," was all the same frequently taken to be a legitimate constituent of the social-democratic party. The war demonstrated the impossibility of this view for the future. Opportunism has became "ripe," it has carried through to the end its rôle of emissary of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement. Unity with opportunism has developed into complete hypocrisy, as we see in the example of the German social-democratic party. In all important cases (*e.g.*, in the voting on August 4) the opportunists came with their ultimatum, carrying it through by the aid of their manifold connections with the bourgeoisie, their majority in the leadership of the trade unions, &c. *Unity* with the opportunists signifies now *in reality* subordination of the working class to its "own" national bourgeoisie, alliance with it for the oppression of foreign nations and for the struggle for the privileges of the Great Powers, *denoting a splitting of the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.*

However arduous in individual instances may be the struggle

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against the opportunists who predominate in many organisations, however differently in different countries the process of cleansing the labour parties from the opportunists has to be conducted, this process is necessary and fruitful. Reformist socialism is moribund ; the socialism now arising "will be revolutionary, uncompromising, rebellious" as the French socialist, Paul Golay, correctly expresses it.

"*Kautskyanism*"

Kautsky, the greatest authority of the Second International, represents an, in the highest degree typical and lurid, example, how the recognition of Marxism in words has led in reality to its conversion into "Struvism" or "Brentanism."* We see this also in the example of Plechanov. By barefaced sophisms, Marxism is robbed of its revolutionary living soul; *everything* in Marxism is recognised, *except* revolutionary means of struggle, propaganda and preparation for them and education of the masses just in this direction. Kautsky "reconciles" without thinking the basic ideas of social-chauvinism, recognition of defence of the fatherland in this war, with a diplomatic apparent concession to the lefts in the form of abstention from voting credits and verbal affirmation of the oppositional character of the party. Kautsky, who in 1909 published a whole book on the coming epoch of revolution and of the connection of war with revolution, who in 1912 *signed the Bâsle Manifesto on the utilisation of the coming war for the revolution*, now uses all arguments to justify and eulogise social-chauvinism, and like Plechanov, joins with the bourgeoisie in jeering at all thoughts of revolution, all steps towards immediate revolutionary struggle.

The Slogan of Marxists is the Slogan of Revolutionary Social Democracy

The war has undoubtedly evoked the acutest crisis and incredibly intensified the suffering of the masses of the people. The reactionary character of this war, the shameless lies of the bourgeoisie of *all* countries, who hide their robber aims under the cloak

* Struve was the leader of the opportunist section of the Russian social democrats at the beginning of the century. He soon became a renegade, later an extreme reactionary. Brentano was a German economist, a bitter anti-Marxist and champion of "class harmony."

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of " national " ideology, all this on the basis of the objectively revolutionary situation inevitably creates revolutionary moods among the masses. It is our duty to make these moods conscious, to deepen and to shape them. This task is only correctly expressed in the slogan of " conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war," and *every* determined class struggle during the war, every seriously conducted tactic of " mass action " inevitably leads to it. We cannot know whether the powerful revolutionary movement will blaze up as a consequence of the first or of the second war between the Great Powers, whether during or after the war, but in any case it is our bounden duty to work systematically and steadfastly precisely in this direction.

The Bâsle Manifesto appeals directly to the example of the Paris Commune, *i.e.*, to the conversion of the war of the governments into a civil war. Half a century ago the proletariat was too weak, the objective pre-requisites of socialism were not yet mature, the collaboration of the revolutionary movements in all the warring countries was unthinkable, the enthusiasm of a section of the Paris workers for " national ideology " (the tradition of 1792) was its revolutionary weakness, as Marx showed, and one of the causes of the collapse of the Commune. Half-a-century later, the conditions which weakened the revolution then have vanished, and to-day it would be unpardonable for a socialist to wish to renounce action in the spirit of the Paris communards.

The Example of Fraternisation in the Trenches

Bourgeois newspapers in all the warring countries give examples of fraternisation of the soldiers even in the trenches. The draconic edicts issued by the military authorities (*e.g.*, Germany and England) against such fraternisation proved that it was regarded very seriously by the Government and the bourgeoisie. If, under conditions of the complete domination of opportunism in the leading circles of the West-European social-democratic parties (as shown by the support for social-chauvinism given by the entire social-democratic press and all authorities of the second international), cases of fraternisation were possible, it proves to us how greatly it would be possible to shake the present criminal, reactionary slave-owners' war and to organise a revolutionary international

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movement, if even only the left socialists of the warring countries had systematically worked in this direction.

The Significance of Illegal Organisation

The leading anarchists of the world in this war have been tainted with social-chauvinism (in the sense of Plechanov and Kautsky) no less than the opportunists. One of the most useful consequences of the war will be that it will destroy both opportunism and anarchism.

While in no case, under no circumstances, renouncing the utilisation of the slightest legal possibilities for organisation of the masses and socialist propaganda, the social-democratic party must, however, break with worship of legality. "You fire first, gentlemen of the bourgeoisie," wrote Engels, hinting precisely at civil war and the necessity to break with legality, *after* it has been violated by the bourgeoisie. The war has shown that the bourgeoisie does violate it in all countries, even the most free, and that it is impossible to lead the masses towards revolution without creating an illegal organisation for the propaganda, discussion, valuation and preparation of revolutionary means of struggle. In Germany, for example, everything honest done by the socialists is done against despicable opportunism and hypocritical "Kautsky-anism" and is done illegally. In England one is sent to prison for printing manifestoes against recruiting.

To regard as compatible with membership of a social-democratic party, denial of illegal methods of propaganda and jeering at them in the legal press is treachery to socialism.

On Defeat of One's "Own" Government in the Imperialist War

The champions of the victory of one's own Government in the present war and those who utter the slogan "no victory, no defeat," alike adopt the standpoint of social-chauvinism. The revolutionary class in a reactionary war must desire the defeat of its own government, it must see the connection between its failure in the war and the making easier its overthrow. Only a bourgeois who holds the belief that a war begun by the Governments will inevitably end as a war of the Governments, and desires this, can find the idea "ridiculous" and "nonsensical" that the socialists of *all* the

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warring countries should proclaim the desire for the defeat of *all* their "own" Governments. On the contrary, precisely such a proclamation corresponds to the secret wishes of every class-conscious worker and lies in the correct line of our activity which is directed towards the conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war.

Undoubtedly the serious agitation against the war of a portion of the British, German and Russian socialists "weakened the fighting strength" of the Governments concerned, but this agitation was to their credit. The socialists must make clear to the masses that there is no salvation for them without the revolutionary overthrow of their "own" Governments and that the desperate situation of these Governments in the present war must be used just with this object.

On Pacifism and the Slogan of Peace

The pacifist mood of the masses frequently denotes the beginning of protest, revolt and consciousness that the war is a reactionary one. To utilise this mood is the duty of all social democrats. They will most cordially participate in every movement and every demonstration on this basis, they will, however, not deceive the people by assenting to the idea that without a revolutionary movement it is possible to obtain a peace without annexations, without oppression of small nations, without plunder, without seeds of new wars between the present Governments and ruling classes. Such a deception of the people would only assist the secret diplomacy and the counter-revolutionary plans of the warring Governments. Whoever is for a lasting and democratic peace, must be for civil war against governments and the bourgeoisie.

Self-determination of Nations

The most widespread deception of the people on the part of the bourgeoisie in this war is the masking of their robber aims by the ideology of "liberation of peoples"—the British promise to free the Belgians, the Germans promise to free the Poles, and so on. In reality, as we have seen, this is a war of the oppressors of the majority of the nations of the world for the strengthening and extension of this oppression.

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Socialists cannot attain their great goal without combating every oppression of nations. They must, therefore, certainly demand that the socialist parties of the *oppressing countries* (particularly of the so-called " Great Powers ") recognise and defend the right of self-determination of the *oppressed* nations, and notably in the political sense of the word, *i.e.*, as the right of political separation. A socialist of a big State or colony-owning nation who does not defend this right is a chauvinist.

The defence of this right not only is not an incitement to the formation of small states, but leads, on the contrary, to a more free, fearless and consequently more extensive and general formation of great states and alliances of states, which is of greater advantage to the masses and corresponds more with economic development.

The socialists of the *oppressed* nations must for their part come out for the complete (including organisational) unity of the *workers* of the oppressing and of the oppressed nations. The idea of juridical separation of nationalities from one another (the so-called " national cultural autonomy " of Otto Bauer and Renner) is a reactionary idea.

Imperialism is the epoch of progressive oppression of the nations of the whole world by a few " Great Powers," and consequently the struggle for the socialist revolution against imperialism is impossible without recognition of the right of self-determination. " A people cannot be free that oppresses foreign peoples," said Marx and Engels. That proletariat cannot be socialist that condones the slightest act of violence of its " own " nation against other nations."

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THE FUTURE OF REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNIONISM

By HARRY POLLITT

THE development of trade unionism in this country since the end of the General Strike has been clear to every acute observer in the working-class movement. The betrayal of the General Strike by the leadership was, in my opinion, a deliberately conscious act, not merely to escape from an inconvenient situation, but in order that this failure might be used as the basis for the development of their present policy of class collaboration.

Since that time every step which has been made has been in the direction of developing trade unionism as a direct part of the apparatus of capitalist exploitation. We have not yet reached the final stage, but the present position is such that the whole problem of the trades union policy of the revolutionary workers calls for review and clarification, particularly so because of the advent of a Labour Government which will be found to intensify the drive considerably.

It was no accident that, within a few weeks of the Trades Union Dispute Act becoming law, the Edinburgh T.U.C. in 1927 should have taken the first step towards the policy of class collaboration. From that time on the race has been accelerated in every move that has been made, right through the Mond Conferences, and now through the joint co-operation with the Federation of British Industries and the National Confederation of Employers.

At the same time the attacks upon the workers have been steadily increasing, not so much in the direction of national demands on national unions for wage reductions, but in a carefully planned policy of taking factory by factory, pit by pit, or the union concerned with a particular district of an industry, and in all cases making inroads upon workshop customs and practices, reduction of piece-work lists, speeding up and abolition

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of concessions formerly won in acute class struggles. If it were possible to collect the data showing the exact effect upon the workers of this planned policy, it would be discovered that colossal inroads have been made upon the workers' conditions.

The statements of workers all over the country comparing their conditions of to-day with those of two years ago constitute the practical proof of the correctness of this claim.

For a time this planned policy of the capitalists and the trade union leaders was carried out without much resistance, just because its nature did not make it a national issue. Yet a study of the trade union journals in which the district organisers' reports can be found over a period of the last two years shows how acute the process has become.

There is now a new awakening taking place. This has manifested itself in such struggles as the Rego strike, the Austin strike, the London Busmen's dispute and the Dawdon dispute. All, be it noted, in industries where the capitalists are precisely those engaged in industrial peace negotiations with the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

In every one of these disputes, as well as in those negotiations which have taken place in other disputes, the central feature has been the deliberately defeatist rôle of the trade union leaders and the fight that the workers themselves have had to make against both the capitalists and their own leaders. The best example of how far this policy has been carried out was shown during the middle of the Dawdon dispute, when Lord Londonderry could openly issue a Press statement saying he had no quarrel with the miners' officials, either national, county or local. This statement was never repudiated even by the local officials who were actually facing the men.

Simultaneously with these events there is a growth of non-unionism, but this growth represents an entirely different attitude from that which has formerly characterised non-unionism in this country. It is also accompanied by a continually decreasing attendance at trade union branch meetings, and the open scoffing and jeering of the workers in the workshops at the trade union leaders.

This is the situation that the revolutionary workers have to

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face. It does not mean, however, that trades unionism is played out. It does mean that trades unionism has now to be adapted to modern conditions of struggles in the pursuit of capitalist rationalisation and intensified class struggle, and this can only be done by the revolutionary workers frankly discussing the existing situation and how this reorganisation of trades unionism as a fighting force against capitalism and not an appendage of capitalism, can be brought about.

The period of the Labour Government will be one in which, under cover of skilful small concessions, the Government will carry through schemes assisting the rationalisation of industry. These schemes will lower the standards of the workers as a whole. Preparations for new wars will be made under hypocritical phrases of "pacifism," and "no more war," attacks will be prepared on the U.S.S.R. under cover of giving recognition to the U.S.S.R. Attacks will be made on the revolutionary peoples of the colonial countries.

These factors, in conjunction with the hopes aroused amongst large sections of workers that wages advances will be given through a Labour Government, points to a situation in which the Minority Movement has to lead the independent struggles of the workers against the trade union bureaucracy and the Labour Government.

This independent rôle and leadership of the Minority Movement is the most important thing that needs to be understood in the present period. The old fetishism of "constitutional action," of "honouring national agreements," of trade union legalism must be destroyed if we are to fight against the capitalists and their agents, the existing leadership.

This issue, therefore, of fighting independently the daily struggles of the working class, in a period of "Courts of Inquiries," of "Independent Arbitrators," and Labour Government betrayals and treacheries, means a complete break with all the old conceptions of confining our activities within the constitutional framework of trade union branches, district committees, &c. New forces have to be won, and new forms of organisation have to be found. I believe that the following line of approach is the one which must be made as a start towards the

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winning of the mass of the workers, organised and unorganised, both to our policy and organisation.

(1) *Factory Organisation and Activity*

It is directly in the factories that our strength lies and it is precisely here that so little actual effort is put in to win over this strength. We assume that nothing can be done by factory agitation and organisation, when, as a matter of fact, six months' concentration on any factory in this country on the right lines will win the mass of the workers to our policy and against that of the existing trade union leadership.

It is impossible to be in any workshop two days without being struck by the bitterness, cynicism, sarcasm and disillusionment that is expressed in workshop conversation regarding the existing trade union leadership, and our job is to concentrate our forces upon winning these workers to our constructive policy of militant trades unionism.

What does this mean? It means that in every factory where there is a small group of comrades they should begin to initiate discussions amongst one or two of the workers with whom they have influence, showing the meaning of events which are happening, taking the initiative in calling a meeting of all workers in that particular shop or department, without regard to craft, occupation, union organisation or whether these workers belong to a union at all. Not many will come to such a meeting at first, but some will, and this is a start. At such a meeting as this shop conditions can be frankly discussed and a direct approach made to get outstanding grievances remedied. This will immediately bring our work before a larger mass of workers, who will contrast the efficacy of this method with the long-drawn-out process which has to be gone through in the trade union machine before grievances can be attended to.

Then will come the desire for such work to be put on a permanent basis, and a factory committee can be appointed representing all workers, organised and unorganised. This committee will not be working long before it will feel the need of other weapons with which to fight, and the first of these will undoubtedly be a factory paper. In this paper not only

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shop questions, but wider issues of policy can be discussed, so that the stronger this work becomes the less fear there is of the management being able to operate a victimisation policy. Everybody knows that when an active worker gets sacked, the average man in the workshop who has never been inside a trade branch will say it is a "bloody shame" and he should be backed up, but just because under present conditions in nine cases out of ten this question is left till the complicated trade union machine begins to operate, the sense of grievance and resentment has died down. Whereas a group of comrades could take advantage of such sentiments and make their positions in the factories immeasurably stronger than they are at the present time.

But what the delegates to the Minority Movement Conference have to frankly realise is that without effective factory work and organisations there can be no fight made for better conditions for the working class and no real fight made against the Labour Government and trade union bureaucracy.

(2) *The Problem of the Unorganised*

It is necessary to state frankly that until recent events the average non-unionist represented the most backward section of the working class. There is always a section of workers who, because of backwardness and apathy, have never been prepared to fight and pay for better conditions, and these have formed the bulk of the unorganised workers.

To-day the situation has changed. Whilst I believe that this type of worker still forms the larger proportion of the unorganised, and they must be frankly spoken to about this attitude because of what trades unionism under the present leadership has become, there are thousands of good trade unionists who have left the trade unions because they disagree with the policy.

I believe that this attitude is fundamentally wrong. Serious revolutionary workers do not leave organisations voluntarily, they intensify their efforts within them and in the factories with which they are associated, to fight for a new leadership and a new policy. If in the pursuance of this course they are suspended or disqualified from holding office in a particular union, our duty is to fight with all our strength to maintain the positions we have got,

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and in the degree that we have strengthened our factory organisation we can prevent the process of automatic exclusion and suspension which the bureaucrats have only found possible to operate because of our inherent weakness in the factories.

Therefore we have now to intensify our work amongst the unorganised to bring them into closer relations with the rest of the workers. The approach to this question is not to put the issue of which trade union they shall join as the first step in this direction, but to get them in and around the Factory Committees and factory organisation that we have to set up.

In many recent strikes the unorganised have played a more important rôle than the trade unionists. Austins is the most important case in point, because it was a direct fight against one of the most important employers who have collaborated with the General Council of the Trades Union Congress. Many trade unions have always recognised the rôle of the unorganised in strikes or lock-outs by paying them dispute pay to preserve the solidarity of the men. We have to get them into trade unions to-day, as the basis of new forces, to strengthen our work and task of reorganising trade unionism under our revolutionary new leadership fighting a class battle against capitalism and its agents the General Council.

So that the problem of which union they shall join becomes not the primary, but the secondary issue; the first is to get them clear on the value of factory organisation under our leadership, so that we recruit them for trades unions on a class conscious basis, they will then form the new elements under our control, who in organised fashion are then fighting both the capitalists and the trade union leaders.

At the same time we must face the possibility of the Belfast Trades Union Congress passing a series of recommendations that will carry still further their policy of disrupting and splitting the trade union movement. We cannot fight the existing leaders with only a small number of active workers, the mass of the workers must be with us. This mass are never in the trade union branches, but they are in the factories, and it is this problem of effective factory organisation that comes up every time we consider how best to fight for better conditions, which to-day

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involves a fight against two enemies and active participation in what are stigmatised as unofficial movements, but which in reality are the real movements of the workers.

The approach, therefore, to the problem of the unorganised is through the factories, and in that approach we kill stone dead the conception that any section of workers can get anything without fight or personal sacrifice. We are not advocates of non-unionism, we are not now attempting to glorify a section of workers whom yesterday we looked down upon because they were prepared to take all the benefits of trade unionism without paying anything in return.

On the contrary, we want to bring the unorganised into a more effective form of organisation than now exists, and we must not be afraid to assert that where factory organisation exists and all workers are members, that this is better trade unionism, in the real meaning of the word, than is provided by the policy of company unionism, the aim towards which the existing leaders are working. By this method alone can we solve the problem of how to rally all the workers in struggle, at the same time laying down the future basis of the organised working-class movement of this country.

(3) *Work Inside the Trade Unions*

One of the great mistakes we have made in the recent period has been the calm assumption that it was impossible to do any further effective work inside the trade unions, and from the moment the policy of the " Document " was introduced there has been a widespread conception that to fight any further to win official positions in the unions was hopeless, with the result that the bureaucracy has now been able to operate this policy on a much wider scale, and more effectively, I am convinced, than they themselves ever thought was possible.

So far from deserting this field of work, we must intensify our work in winning official positions, particularly in branches, and this follows naturally from our intensification of activities within the factories. This policy must be pursued, even where the "Document" is in operation, and an open fight made with the backing of the workers in the factories to retain these positions. It will lead to the suspension of branches, the withholding of

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benefits, the taking of legal proceedings against the revolutionary workers, but in the very degree that we force the bureaucrats to resort to the methods of capitalist repression, so we increasingly demonstrate the correctness of our analysis of the rôle of the trade union leadership to-day before an ever-increasing number of workers.

We do not surrender the fight for the conquest of the unions, but we do look round for new methods to lead the workers in actual struggle in order that we can win the leadership of the workers.

To assist in this struggle we, therefore, not only link up the unorganised workers through the medium of factory organisation, but we should recruit them into the new unions where they exist or the old existing unions as the basis of new forces fighting under our leadership for our policy.

By this combination of increased factory activity and the greater drive within the unions themselves upon the basis of our leadership in all economic struggles, we are taking the concrete steps towards developing the form of organisation and the outlook which alone can effectively realise the conquest of the organised working class under the leadership of the revolutionary workers.

New Industrial Councils

This involves a new outlook in regard to local unifying centres of factory and trade union organisation, and the work begun by the London Industrial Council is an indication of the lines upon which this work should be tackled. The existing Trades Council organisation has become simply a part of the bureaucratic apparatus of the General Council and Labour Party leaders. Our job now is to popularise the formation of new local Industrial Councils that shall serve as the local leadership in all phases of industrial activity. They should be representative of factory committees and trade union branches actually in revolt against the present leadership.

The beginning of this work will develop local strength and contacts, thus enabling more effective leadership and drive in all strike movements in which the workers direct from the factories must assume the leadership, and together with the

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local Industrial Council be able to mobilise the whole of the workers in a particular locality for their support.

I believe that the above represent the main lines upon which the revolutionary movement in its work in the factories and trade unions must now proceed. It will be the task of the Sixth Annual Conference of the National Minority Movement to formulate finally the policy that must be adopted as a result of the analysis that will be made at that Conference of the present situation of British capitalism and the rôle of the trade union leadership. If that Conference gets clear on what is the actual position of British capitalism and the real rôle of its agents, the Labour Government and the trade union bureaucracy, there will be a tremendous support given to the future work of the Minority Movement.

In this new period, the chief tasks of the Minority Movement are to lead and organise strike movements ; independent fights for higher wages, shorter hours, the general effects of rationalisation; a co-ordinating centre for the activities of the revolutionary workers ; a better and more intense fight in support of our colonial comrades ; the fight against the growing war danger ; struggle in defence of the U.S.S.R. ; for the unity of the workers nationally and internationally.

In the sphere of organisation, its tasks are to consolidate its wide influence into definite organisations. Increase its individual membership, strengthen its groups, win new union branch and district committee affiliations, strengthen its work in the factories to win positions in the trade union branches ; win the unorganised workers to our side ; take the initiative in forming new unions in the new industries that are springing up ; extend its work to new local industrial councils.

If these tasks are undertaken with energy, then in twelve months a situation will exist in which many of the theoretical speculations in regard to problems of strike strategy, the rôle of the unorganised, the problem of new unions, &c., will have been worked out in the actual field of experience and a much clearer conception of the actual day-to-day fight have been realised.

The test of all revolutionary workers is the test of what they are prepared to do in the factories. That is where the face of the Movement must be turned. It is the most important and the

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most neglected field upon which the future tactics of the whole organised working-class movement have to be worked out. The test of the genuineness of militant trade unionists and of those who have left the unions because they say they disagree with present policy is what they are prepared to do now towards the development of effective factory organisation from which alone can grow the new forces and leadership that can successfully carry on the fight against the policy of surrender and defeatism that characterises the whole tactics of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Government.

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LABOUR'S PROMISE AND PERFORMANCE

By W. JOSS

THE second Labour Government has fulfilled its promise. It is a government of capitalism. On July 2, the introduction of the first King's Speech by a Labour Government indicated how far promises would become performances.

The speech was one of studied moderation and as a document raised very little contention from either the Conservative or Liberal benches. It had a "good" Press (*i.e.*, it conformed to the general policy of the capitalist class). Some, indeed, praised it fulsomely. The only objections raised were to its vagueness with regard to the Miners' Hours, Trades Disputes Act and relations with the U.S.S.R. Since then, the assurances of Mr. MacDonald and his cabinet have entirely reassured these critics, who are now looking forward to a period of statesmanship from His Majesty's Labour Government when it has emerged from its process of "thinking" how best to restore British capitalism.

That the restoration of British capitalism is the rôle to which the Labour Government aspires is confirmed by the King's Speech and subsequent statements by the Labour Cabinet. The main points dealing with Foreign Policy were the confirmation of the "Young Plan" dealing with reparations. It is interesting to recall that the first "Labour" Government was also placed in office to confirm the "Dawes Plan." The conversations on Naval Disarmament with U.S.A. are indicative of the growing tension between the two main imperialist groups and are not making much headway towards closer relations. The consultations with the Dominions regarding the signing of the Optional Clause are not likely to be entirely successful. The peculiar situation in which Britain finds herself in solving the contradictions of foreign relations is becoming increasingly apparent in the schemes of Empire Economic Unity. These questions arise sharply and are the basis of the diplomatic manœuvring which precedes war. The counterpart of this preparation for war also finds expression in Home Affairs. Rationalisation and not the Unemployment problem is the main issue.

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Schemes are promised for the improvement of the transport system, for stimulating exports, for economic development of the colonies; iron, steel and cotton are to be subjects of immediate inquiries in order that these depressed industries may recapture foreign markets. These measures, which will intensify the competitive struggle between the imperialist groups for markets, naturally lead to war. Some writers on the Labour Government, while admitting the role of the Labour Government to be mainly imperialist, still hold the belief that the Government will play a rôle similar to the Liberal Governments from 1906-1914 and by a series of minor reforms create a social unity behind the Government which will carry the nation into war in support of the Government.

The reasons advanced are that in the field of unemployment, widows' pensions, housing provision, education, Trades Dispute Bill, and miners' hours and wages, there is a field on which all parties in the State can agree. While it is true that all these subjects were referred to in the King's speech the events of the past fortnight indicate that the fulfilment of these fine election pledges is conditional, as the notices of motion by the Minister of Health and the Attorney-General on July 2 indicate. On that day Mr. Greenwood gave notice at an early date he would ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Law relating to widows and orphans' pensions. On Saturday, July 6, MacDonald addressing the Durham Labour women said that "they had been baffled in this one of their first Administrative acts." Sir Wm. Jowitt, the Attorney-General, gave notice to present a Bill to *amend* the Trades Dispute Act of 1927. Its character when introduced will in all probability only amend the part dealing with the Political Levy, but the major questions relating to strikes, picketing, the illegality of the General Strike will remain untouched.

Curing Unemployment

The plans outlined by J. H. Thomas for reducing unemployment will provide cold comfort for the unemployed. His speech on July 3 earned the approval of the Conservatives and Liberals when he declared that there was no remedy but a revival of trade.

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His attempt to minimise the million constantly unemployed, his support for extended industrial transference and the deportation of the unemployed to Canada and the Empire caused confused mutterings amongst the Labour back benches but no real revolt. Maxton's dissatisfaction was only verbal, no attempt was made to raise any real opposition.

During the election the raising of the school age and the provision of maintenance for extended education, the increasing of pensions at 65 and the probable pensioning at 60 was stressed as a means to assist unemployment. This has now been remitted to a committee. The old age pensioner who voted for a Labour Government, and on the Friday following the instalment of the Government in office demanded 20s. at the post office when producing his pension book, has had his disappointment and can express his dissatisfaction with the timorous policy of the Labour Government. The widow with children excluded under the present provision of the Act, the miners who looked forward to the repeal of the 8-Hours Mines Act, the rank and file trade unionist who expected the repeal of the Trades Disputes Act, the unemployed—workers generally are disappointed. It will not be healthy for the Government when they become dissatisfied. The problem of Labour Peers to the workers is too remote from the realities of life and it is on these realities that the shams and illusions created by the Labour Government will be dispelled by a rising wave of working class revolt.

That rationalisation is the main measure before the Labour Government was well presented by J. H. Thomas at the N.U.R. Conference, when he said :—

> Another difficulty was to meet the world's situation to-day. *We* found ourselves with industries that were out of date and obsolete. Rationalisation was essential to those industries and was the only means by which they could face the world position. Then, again, in that inevitable process rationalisation meant masses of our people being thrown out of employment. (*The Times*, July 6, 1929.)

Foreign Policy

Continuity of Baldwinism in domestic affairs. So also continuity in foreign affairs. Mr. Arthur Henderson in the debate on Foreign Affairs confirmed the Baldwin policy in China on the question of

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extra territoriality, the commercial agreements, the evacuation of Wei-hai-wei, the utilisation of the Boxer indemnity. On the resumption of diplomatic relations with Russia, he adopted the Imperial Conference decision to consult the Dominions before recognition, and stated that "even if there had been no such records on the minutes of the Imperial Conference he would have given it serious consideration before he agreed to take such an important step as this."

Again on the question of propaganda :—

> In 1924 I think the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary of that date (J. R. M.) made it unmistakably clear that we were not going to tolerate any propaganda that interfered in the internal affairs either of this country or any of the Dominions of this country or any part of the British Empire (Opposition cheers) That is our position to-day and that will continue to be our position.

Sir Austen Chamberlain could not have stated it better nor more concisely than Mr. Arthur Henderson.

A further departure from election pledges was also apparent when the Labour Foreign Secretary accepted the principle of joint evacuation of the Rhineland. His statement on July 5 was repeated in replies to questions.

> With regard to the evacuation of the Rhineland he had come to the conclusion that, while it was of the greatest importance that the evacuation should take place at the earliest possible moment, it would not be in the interests of peace in Europe if that step had to be taken by degrees. They ought to get both the French and Belgian Governments to take the step with them. (*The Times*, July 6, 1929.)

In addition, despite no mention of India in the King's Speech, MacDonald and Wedgwood Benn give complete assurance to the Conservative benches of continuity of policy on the Simon Commission and on the Meerut trial. Continuity at home, abroad and in the Empire.

New Wage Struggles

Less than two months have passed since the General Election and the return of the Labour Government, but it would be wrong to suppose that the futility of Parliament is the end of progress. The great masses of workers who voted Labour are still advancing. The increased resistance in the industrial field is apparent in the number of days lost during the past six months. Wage and hours disputes are imminent throughout the whole coalfield with actual struggles

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of an isolated character breaking out day by day. The Blackpool conference of the M.F.G.B., despite its packed character, will demand that the Labour Government will declare its intentions regarding wages, hours and a National Agreement. No amount of procrastination by MacDonald and Mondist Turner will prevent the miners moving forward. The decision taken by the N.U.R. conference and the Joint presentation by the three railway unions for restoration of the 2½ per cent. cut of last July is being heralded with alarm by the railway directors, who propose to present counter proposals for a further reduction of wages or, alternatively, the drastic dismissals of employees both in the shops and in the traffic grades.

The lock-out notices of the cotton employers to enforce a 25 per cent. reduction off list rates (2s. 6d. in the £1 off wages) on July 29 will be met by the resistance of the workers in the cotton industry who voted Labour and who will look to the Government to protect them against the vicious attack of the employers. Negotiations through the Ministry of Labour on the basis of Labour policy can only mean sacrifices from the cotton workers.

The wage demands of the engineers for 8s. increase is to be discussed on July 25 and a policy outlined. The rank and file are ready to reply to Sir Allan Smith and are moving forward despite the restrictions imposed by the cumbersome machinery of negotiations. The Austin strike at Birmingham, Armstrong Whitworth strike at Coventry and the aircraft workers at Howden are all indications of the pressure from below. Even the unemployed after a period of quiescence are moving forward again as a result of the tightening of the administrative machinery of the Labour Exchanges and the Guardians. It is the rôle of the Labour Government and the Mondist Trade Union bureaucracy to hold back and defeat the rising wave of working class resistance to capitalist rationalisation.

It is the rôle of the Communist Party to lead and make conscious the opposition of the workers, to mobilise and organise the working class against the Labour Government of rationalisation and war. The perspective and conditions of revolutionary struggle are favourable. Now is the time to rally our forces.

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AN ECHO OF THE GENERAL ELECTION

By SHAUKAT USMANI

[*Below we print the election message sent to Spen Valley from Meerut Jail by one of the Indian working-class leaders now being tried on a charge of "conspiracy to deprive the King of his sovereignty of India." Owing to a hold-up by the authorities, it arrived too late for more than a few copies to be circulated in the constituency. Furthermore, as a statement of the position of the Indian Communist leaders in relation to the present trial, we believe it is worthy of the attention of a larger audience.*—ED.]

I HAVE been selected by the Communist Party in Spen Valley to stand as a candidate for Parliament and I wish, though separated from you by 6,000 miles and prison bars, to place before you an appeal. I appeal to you, not on my own behalf but of the 300 million toiling masses of India.

For never before in British political history has the question of the colonies been so clearly presented as in this election, and never before have the workers of Britain been given the chance to return the true working class answer. You have in your Liberal Candidate, Sir John Simon, the best possible representative of the Imperialist predatory force which rules the world to-day—Capitalist Imperialism. Sir John Simon is a brilliant scholar, an eminent lawyer, the foremost defender of his class against your General Strike of 1926. He has been selected for the highly responsible position of the Chairman of the Statutory Commission for the purpose of riveting still more firmly upon India the chains of slavery and exploitation. To India to-day, Simon more than any other individual personifies and represents British Imperialism.

On the other hand, as your Communist Candidate, I claim to be a humble representative of the vast mass forces of revolt which are now so quickly gaining strength in India and throughout the entire colonial world. I have been working for the masses of this country since 1920. Imprisoned without trial in

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1923, I was tried and sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment in 1924 for Conspiracy as a Communist. Since my release in 1927, I have been engaged in working-class organisation, as a result of which I have again been imprisoned in March of this year. My experience is not exceptional. All in India who take part in the struggle for emancipation or who assist the exploited masses must suffer more or less the same fate as I have done. I come before you as a rank-and-file worker in the cause of the freedom of the colonial masses. I am asking you to support me rather than Sir John Simon. I am asking you to disregard personal consideration, the claim of traditions and the ties of race and colour, and to prefer the weak to the strong, the poor to the rich, the absent to the present. I ask you to make this sacrifice not for my sake, but for the sake of the solidarity of the workers of the world.

India and the Simon Commission

We in India boycott Simon and the Statutory Commission because they represent to us the Imperialism which we rightly and justly hate. Under the rule of the British Imperialism, India is the poorest country in the world. Our vast masses of the peasants exist on an average income of 2d. a day. More than 90 per cent. of the population is illiterate. We are even denied a representative government. If we attempt to assert our own rights to determine our own destiny or merely to organise Trade Unions we are beaten back by armed forces of autocracy, our demonstrators are shot dead and our leaders imprisoned.

I claim your support on grounds of class solidarity also, since our movement is essentially one of the oppressed and the exploited masses—the workers and peasants. In recent years the organised workers have rallied to the fight against Imperialism. When Simon first came to India in 1928, he was greeted on landing by the strike of tens of thousands of workers who demonstrated under the lead of their union and burnt an effigy. The workers' movement is becoming so menacing to Imperialism that special legislation is being enacted to suppress it : the Public Safety Ordinance to cut us off from the international movement, the Trades Disputes Act to break our solidarity; the Press Act to stifle even the voice of criticism. The renewed campaign of

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Imperialism against the national revolution begins with the imprisonment of thirty-one Labour leaders at Meerut (including two English comrades). The working class is taking its rightful place as the leader of the world movement. This is what gives its special significance and importance to your Election. It is a straight fight between the acknowledged leader of Imperialism and a Communist worker—a fighter in the front rank of the opposition to Imperialism. I ask you electors to realise your responsibility, to remember that the eyes of the millions of the toiling masses of India are upon you and to do your duty by them and by yourselves. For by striking a blow against Imperialism in India you are also striking a blow for your own class.

Your Exploiters are our Oppressors

The same clique of exploiters which so hideously oppresses the masses of India also rules and exploits you. Imperialism means colonial slavery, but it also means economic depression and collapse in the Imperialist countries. You cannot compete against Indian miners and textile workers, whose wages are less than 20 per cent. of yours. Imperialism which in India brings sweating, famine, illiteracy and autocracy, in Britain means unemployment, reduction of wage rates, worsening of conditions, smashing of Unions. The capitalists have regularly promised you a trade revival which has never come. It can never come while the colonial workers are forced to work below your rate. Nothing can deal with this situation but the control of all economic life by the workers in their own interests. While imperialism rules, neither you nor we can be free from these, its inevitable consequences. The only way in which unemployment can be abolished, the standard of life improved and peace and freedom established for all, both in the capitalist countries and the colonies, is by the overthrowing of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism. In this task the workers of Britain and the workers and peasants of India must co-operate and fight side by side. In standing by the workers of India you will be fighting for the best interests of your own class.

I ask you not to be misled by the bogy of Communalism which the defenders of Imperialism will use to justify their

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oppression. The conflicts of different communities so far as it exists is mainly due to the activities of Imperialism which must divide in order to rule. The working class is not concerned in the least with Communalism. The accused in the Meerut Conspiracy Case include members of all the principal communities of India, all fighting for one cause.

I must warn you also against the attempts which will be made to condemn the Indian Communists as assassins and bomb-throwers. The oppression of Imperialism has driven many to this course, but they are not Communists. As you know, Communists do not believe in individual terrorism and no Communist has ever practised it.

Against Liberal and Labour Imperialism

I am asking you to repudiate the open, unashamed representative of predatory imperialism. I am informed that the other capitalist candidates will withdraw as is fitting in view of the complete identity of interests and policy between the two capitalist parties. But I am also asking you to repudiate with equal determination the representative of the half-hearted, vaccillating Labour Party. You know it from your experience how the compromising policy of the Labour Party has repeatedly placed it in direct opposition to the interests of the workers and how in all times of crises, such as the Labour Government of 1924 and the miners' strike of 1926, it proves to be identical in action with the capitalist parties. It acts in the same way in regard to the colonies. It is identified equally with the capitalist parties with the Simon Commission. The Labour Government in 1924 was responsible for a policy in every way as reactionary and repressive as that of an openly capitalist government. It bombed villages in Iraq, rejected the demands of the Egyptian Nationalists, despatched warships to overawe the Chinese workers, and in India shot down workers on strike at Cawnpore and Bombay, promulgated the Bengal Ordinance whereby over 200 men were imprisoned for three to four years without trial. It launched the Cawnpore Conspiracy Case. I was myself a victim of the Cawnpore Case and in company with other Comrades, Nalini Gupta, Muzaffar Ahmed, and S. A. Dange, I was sentenced to four years rigorous imprison-

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ment for being a Communist. Such a party claiming to stand for the working class deserves only contempt.

Workers of ALL Countries Unite!

In India, we are in a position to witness the feverish preparations of British imperialism for war which is to be fought from bases in India and Iraq against the Soviet Republic. We realise, as you do, that this war would be a catastrophe of the first magnitude for the working class throughout the world. We know that no efforts and sacrifices must be spared to fight against this war danger and to prepare for an effective action if it actually breaks out. I ask you to remember that a vote for imperialism is a vote for war, a vote for Communism is a vote against war.

As a Communist I stand by the Communist programme, pledged always to fight on behalf of the working class. I do not believe that the salvation of the workers or the establishment of Socialism will be effected through Parliament. Indeed, Parliamentary institutions are one of the greatest obstacles which the workers will have to overcome. You can best assist to free the minds of the workers from the illusions of Parliament by sending as your representative a Communist who will not attempt to use Parliament, but to expose it from within.

Dear Electors, as I am in prison I am unable to express fully all that I have to say to you, but I appeal to you to do your duty as the members of the working class. The workers of Britain first taught the world to form Trade Unions and to fight capitalism, and its lessons we in the working-class movement of colonial countries are still eagerly learning. The workers who have shown the way so long cannot fall behind in this test of consciousness and solidarity. I appeal to you, confident that you will rise superior to limitations of race and colour, and, in spite of all obstacles, stand by your class.

Long live the Revolutionary Solidarity of the Masses of the East and West!

SHAUKAT USMANI

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The World of Labour

INDIA

Tinplate Workers' Strike at Jamshedpur

A STRIKE has been in progress at the works of the Tinplate Company of India, Ltd., Golmuri, Jamshedpur, since April 5. The E.C. of the Union presented the following resolutions framed by the E.C. of the Union and embodying the grievances of the workers which were passed at a mass meeting held on January 9, 1928, with about 3,000 workers present :—

(1) Eighteen detailed demands including a general increase of 25 per cent. in wages; system of provident fund, acting allowances, overtime pay, bonus, maternity benefit, half-hour interval for eight hours' continuous work, all as obtaining in the Tata's Iron and Steel Works; proper housing accommodation; reduction of foreign supervision; six days' minimum wage per week; shoes, aprons, &c., to be supplied; and removal of corruption in matter of appointments.

(2) That the Union be recognised by the Company.

(3) That all persons dismissed or suspended since the formation of the Union, especially the eight men suspended for refusing to do menial work, be reinstated.

M. Daud, President of the A.I.T.U.C., speaking at the meeting, counselled moderation and patience and concluded with a warning that if within a reasonable time the Company did not remove the grievances he would advise the workers to start an emergency fund.

The unrest prevailing was intensified when the Company posted notices on January 18 to the effect that the tinplate works would in future only operate at 50 per cent. capacity, and the works would, therefore, finish work on Wednesday each week. This would affect the bar yard, hot mills, foundry roll shop, shear and opening department. The finishing department to work every alternate week and all workers to be paid only for days worked.

At a mass meeting on the 20th, J. N. Mitra, Vice-President of the Tinplate Workers' Union, stated that:—

> The " over-stock propaganda " of the Company was a huge hoax. There was no heavy stock of tin boxes anywhere and normal practice was to keep three months' consumption as reserve . . . the Company produced 700,000 boxes in 1928 as against 895,000 in 1927, so that granting it ordered 100,000 from South Wales the production of 1928 still fell short.

Negotiations were begun between the Company and M. Daud, to be taken up later by Manek Homi, who had been elected by a unanimous vote

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as President of the Union. Manek Homi, had been prominent in leading the strike there last year.

At a mass meeting on March 26, Homi announced that a settlement had been arrived at. The Union was to be recognised by the Company; all discharged men were to be reinstated, and as far as practicable full time to be given to the workers. The hot mill workers were to be given an extra 2 annas per day (7 per cent. increase) and the principle underlying the other demands was accepted, to be worked out in detail later on.

Nothing was done by the Company. On April 2 J. Mitra, at a meeting, charged the Company with breach of faith, stating that the wage increase agreed upon had not been paid and all the other items withheld. Also when a mill worker was dismissed and his fellow-workers downed tools, the Company agreed to reinstate him but this was not done, and, disgusted, the hot mill men again downed tools, which led to the dismissal of eight more leaders.

By April 5, 3,000 tinplate workers at Golmuri had struck work. By the 17th the situation took a serious turn. Attempts were being made by the Company to obtain blacklegs, the police escorting them in lorries to the works.

The area surrounding the works was continuously guarded by Gurkha military police. It is alleged that some stones were thrown by the strikers at the blacklegs, which resulted in twelve strikers being arrested.

Orders prohibiting meetings were issued and more military requisitioned; meanwhile the Union intensified picketing arrangements.

On May 13 a statement was issued by the Secretary of the Union enumerating the grievances of the workers, and adding:—

> Manek Homi, supported the strike on the second day, but after the twenty-sixth day asked the workers to resume work unconditionally. This somersault on the part of Homi was vehemently resented by the men who rejected his leadership and elected one of their own comrades and worker, J. N. Mitra, as acting president, and are continuing the strike constitutionally.

The Union officials appealed to various leaders to intervene in the dispute. V. V. Giri met the executive and tried to see the management but was refused an interview. He was followed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Diwan Chamanlal. Meanwhile appeals for financial support were sent out supported by Nehru and others. On May 19 M. Daud was authorised by the Union to open up negotiations for settlement on certain minimum demands.

Daud interviewed the management, but was told that the demands were not acceptable and that nearly 2,000 were working at the plant and it would be difficult to dispense with these, but the Company would endeavour to accommodate as many strikers as possible.

That evening, at a mass meeting, when told the "compromise" terms offered, those working decided to join the strikers.

The stubborn attitude of the Company stiffened the strikers and a more intensified picketing was resorted to, and despite the attacks of the Company's paid touts to prevent the "loyalists" from joining the strike, on June 4, the fifty-eighth day of the strike, those working joined the strikers in a body, and a complete deadlock prevailed. This was the position up to June 18.

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BOOK REVIEW

Trade Union Documents. Compiled and Edited by W. Milne-Bailey, Secretary Research Department, T.U.C. (Messrs. G. Bell & Sons, 552 pp., with index, 8s. 6d.)

UNDER the guise of a compilation of documents to facilitate the securing of a "first-hand acquaintance" with the trade union movement, the secretary of the T.U.C. Research Department has produced a volume of propaganda for Mondism and defence of the class collaboration policy of the General Council. We have no hesitation in saying that the reader who attempts to get a conception of the movement and confines himself to the avenues opened up in this volume will get a completely distorted view.

Mr. Bailey has arranged 247 documents in four sections, introduced by an abridged historical survey of the trade union movement :—

I. Value, Aspirations and Objects of Trade Unionism.
II. Structure and Organisation.
III. Functions and Methods.
IV. The Place of Trade Unionism in the Community.

While fully appreciating the difficulty of picturing the real life of the movement from its written records, we are nevertheless left with a feeling that Mr. Bailey has completely failed to interpret the life and spirit of trade unionism.

Out of 247 documents, not *one* is from a rank and file source, while such trade unionists as Sidney Webb, G. D. H. Cole, Professor Laski and R. H. Tawney are reproduced almost with reverence ! Obviously Mr. Bailey's conception of the trade union movement is not that of a worker, but that of a bourgeois civil servant to whom his superior officials constitute the powers to be regarded with respect, the rest of the population existing, like Mr. Bailey's trade union membership, only to pay.

His treatment of the General Strike in 1926 will perhaps best illustrate this attitude. This turning point in the history of the British working class is accorded some twelve documents, and the selection gives the impression that the strike was a slight incident, almost an accident. Nothing is included which gives an adequate estimation of the class forces at work, the material issued by the Communists, by the Minority Movement Conference of Action, by the hundreds of local Trades Councils' Strike Committees is entirely ignored. The shamful agreements signed by various executives, some of which abandoned whole sections of the workers to the employers, are also omitted. The selection should be compared with the documents quoted by R. Page Arnot and Emile Burns in their small volume on the General Strike in order to see how effectively Mr. Bailey's method of selection operates in favour of the General Council.

The index introduction and the document headings all refer to the "National Strike" (the patriotic phrase adopted by the General Council to cover its doubled track in retreating from the brink of a revolutionary crisis)

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although he has included one document (150) in which the "British Worker" itself deals with the "General Strike."

It should not be thought that evasion and suppression constitute our Research Secretary's only means of painting his rosy picture. He is not beyond unadorned misrepresentation when he thinks it necessary. This is shown by his references to the international trade union unity situation and his statement that the R.I.L.U. and the Communists pursue "wrecking tactics" inside the unions.

But it is in his last section that Mr. Bailey departs altogether from any pretence at collecting trade union documents and becomes an open propagandist for Reformism. Headed "The Place of Trade Unionism in the Community," a phrase which in itself indicates the bourgeois, this section contains fifty-two documents, dealing with the legal status of unions, trade union recognition by employers, victimisation, representation on managing bodies, works committees, wage boards, the Industrial Conference and a National Industrial Council. The earlier documents are at any rate issued by trade unions, but as he approaches 1929 Mr. Bailey prefers the vapourings of high-brows like Prof. Laski to documents reflecting the real place of trade unionism in the "community." One would gather from this section that in an atmosphere of philosophic discussion, the trade unions were advancing, after an accidental strike, to the peaceful penetration of the capitalist system and had almost, if not quite, succeeded by their invincible logic in pursuading the capitalist that they could manage his industry better than he himself. There is no indication of the real situation since May 12, 1926, the depression among the membership, the loss of members, the savage dismissals and victimisation, the loss of privileges gained by years of struggle, the breaking up of shop organisation, the cutting of rates, the speeding up and intensification of labour, the rationalisation offensive of the employers. He includes pages about the Mond-Turner discussion, but nothing about the starvation of the miners, the shame of capitalist charity, or the baton charges on men, women and children, nothing about the official sabotage of every forward move, every attempt by the rank and file to get out of the morass in spite of official strike-breaking and blacklegging. He talks about unity in the abstract, but says nothing about the break with the Russian unions, nothing about the driving out of the unions of the best fighters and militants, nothing about the disruption of branches and districts because they fought against the official betrayal.

Neither these omissions nor the appearance of the book at this moment are accidental. Mr. Bailey has totally failed to present a true picture of the development or the present state of trade unionism, but he has shed a vivid light on the workings of the official minds at Transport House, has shown their conception of the goal of trades unionism to be, not the overthrow of capitalism and the emancipation of labour, not the solidarity of the workers of the world and the building of a new life, but the absorption of the unions into the official apparatus of the capitalist state and the big combines.

J. A. M.

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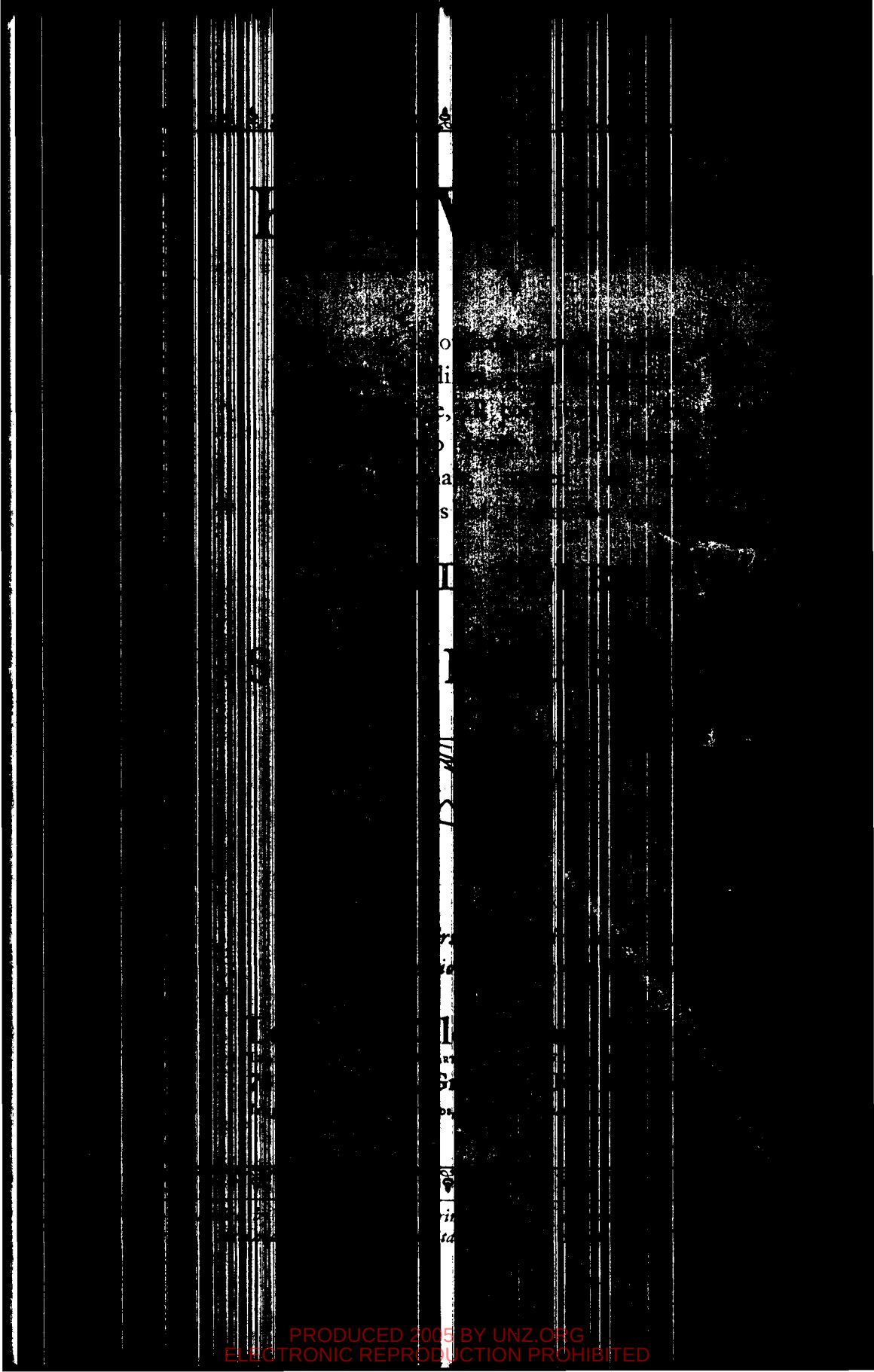

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